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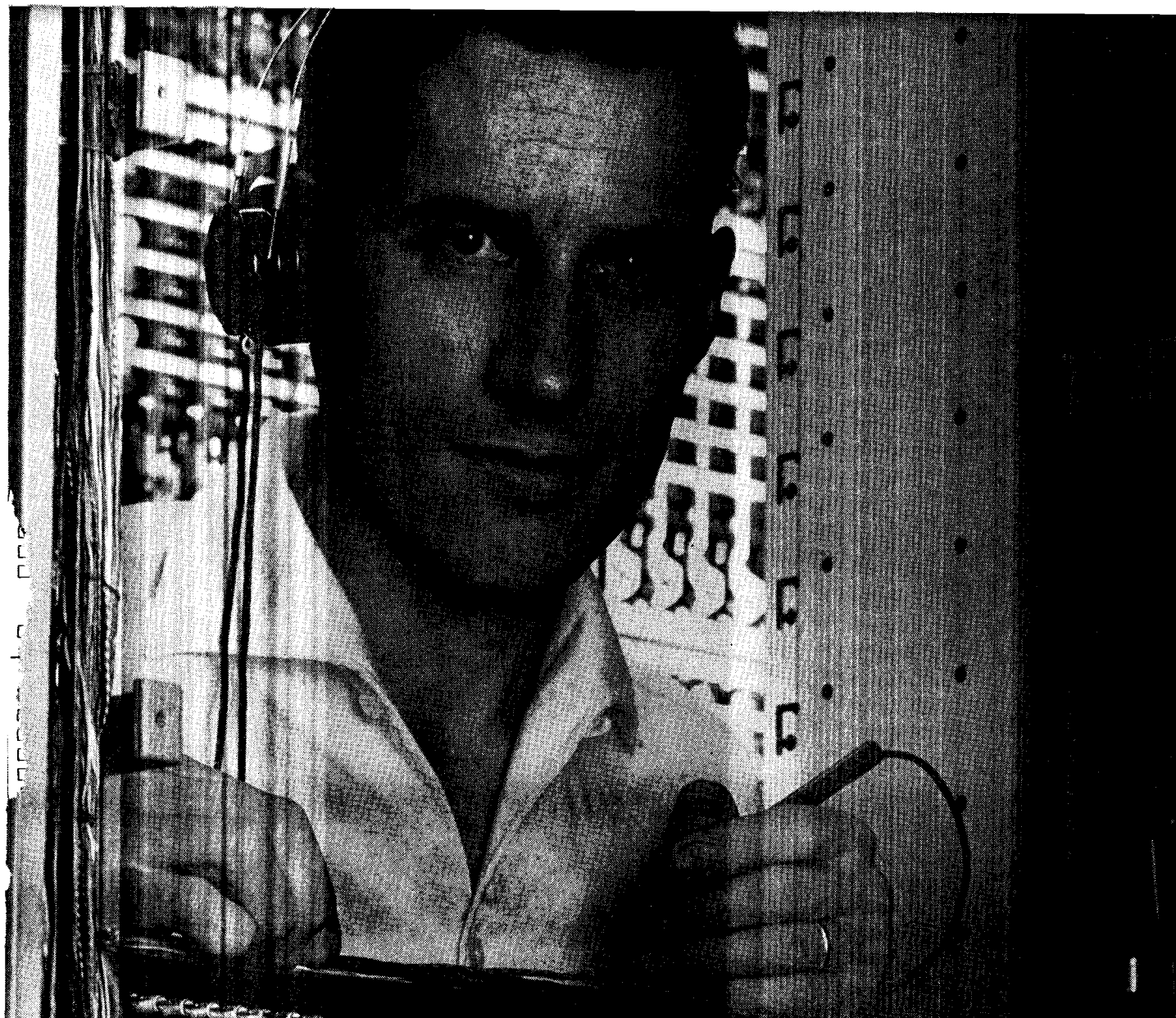
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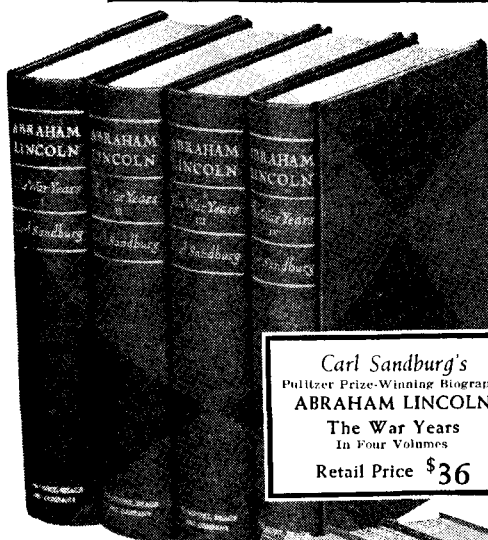
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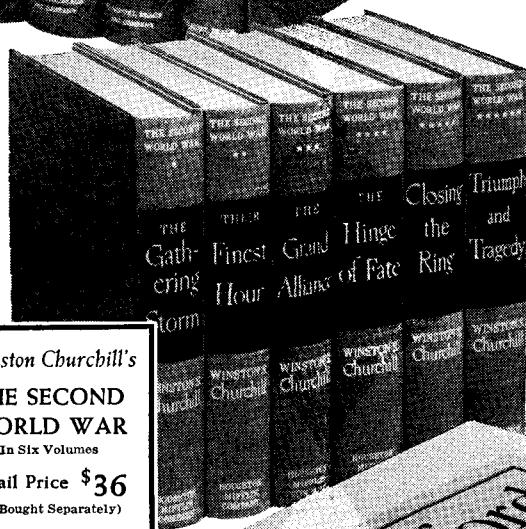
THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY, January, 1957, Vol. 199, No. 1. Published monthly. Editorial, Circulation, and Advertising Offices, 8 Arlington St., Boston 16, Mass. Published at The Rumford Press, 10 Ferry St., Concord, N. H. 50 cents a copy, \$6.00 a year. Unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by return postage. Entered as second-class matter July 15, 1918, at the Post Office at Concord, N. H., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Printed in the U.S.A. by Rumford Press, Concord, N. H. Copyright 1956, by The Atlantic Monthly Company. All rights, including translation into other languages, reserved by the Publisher in the United States, Great Britain, Mexico, and all countries participating in the International Copyright Convention and the Pan-American Copyright Convention. Send Form 3579 to 8 Arlington St., Boston 16, Mass.

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The Middle East

THERE was tragic twentieth-century symbolism in the struggle between Egypt, on one side, and Britain and France, on the other, over control of Suez, the one vital channel between Asia and the West. The violence of the Anglo-French "police action" was all the more tragic because there had already appeared to be a basis of fruitful negotiations worked out in diplomatic talks between Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld and Egypt's UN representative Omar Loutfi in October.

An exchange of notes between these two officials, dated just four days before the attack, indicated clearly that Egypt had accepted reaffirmation of the 1888 Convention and a widening of obligations to include agreements on toll rates, maintenance and development, and reporting on operations to the United Nations. The principle of organized coöperation between an Egyptian Canal Authority and an expanded users' agency was agreed on. Also covered were the questions of fact-finding in disputes, and guarantees for execution on adjudicated disputes, which, it was suggested, might be taken to the International Court of Justice.

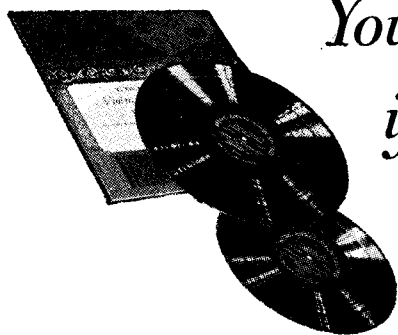
The acceptance by Egypt's Foreign Minister of this outline of agreement made only one reservation. This related to a proposal that in case of non-compliance by either party with an award accorded either side by the Court or arbitration body, either side would have final right to certain limited "police action" for self-protection. On this point Egypt's reservation indicated its great sensitivity on any possible threat to its sovereignty. Nevertheless, Foreign Minister Mahmud Fawzi wrote: "We share with you the view that the framework you have outlined . . . is sufficiently wide to make a further exploration . . . worth trying."

It is doubtful, however, whether even immediate public knowledge of these hopeful exchanges would have deterred the French and British cabinets from their determined assault on the Nasser regime. Nasser's provocative actions, his unbridled propaganda threats to the entire Western position in Africa and the Persian Gulf, and his adoption of a technique of negotiation by irritation had already made him a primary target in London and Paris.

Nasser had finally lost the confidence too of the United States — first by the Czech arms deal, and later by recognition of Red China. However reasonable these actions seemed in Cairo, as means of building military and economic strength, they were interpreted in Washington as a direct rebuff. The chorus of skeptical critics of the Nasser government, already strengthened by cotton interests and Zionist protagonists, was now joined by the faithful congressional supporters of Nationalist China. As a result, last June approval of appropriations for foreign aid was accompanied by specific senatorial injunctions to Secretary of State Dulles to reduce aid to Egypt.

Nasser's Arab rivals

Nasser meanwhile was acquiring enemies nearer home. His assumption of the role of spokesman for the entire Arab bloc alarmed more conservative Arab leaders. King Saud was beginning to sense that Arabia could be relegated to satellite status if he continued to foot the bills for Nasser's propaganda. He set out to withdraw financial support of Egypt's cause in Syria and Jordan. He made it plain that he did not intend to recognize Red China. He buried the hatchet with King Feisal of Iraq and entertained him at Riyadh for the first time last summer. Anti-Egyptian propaganda was



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The Atlantic Report *on the Middle East*

permitted in Arabia, where an army of Egyptian teachers and technicians seemed a little too advanced for Riyadh. Particularly, the appearance of Egyptian labor officials bent on organizing a federation of Arab oil workers in the Persian Gulf caused an anxious flurry there.

In Lebanon the Christian majority was disturbed by the increasing tendency of the Nasser government to discriminate against the Coptic minority in Egypt. A xenophobic attitude, new to cosmopolitan Egypt, was beginning to raise doubts both within and outside of Egypt. Egyptians working for foreign companies were suddenly required to have government permits. Copts and Jews became unemployable by the government. For the first time since 1952 the reactionary influence of the Moslem Brotherhood seemed to be making headway within the government hierarchy.

Up to 1956, in its clashes with the Brotherhood, the revolutionary leadership had prevailed. It had felt strong enough to secularize the Egyptian legal code, for example. But on the whole the moderate reformers and civilians close to the ruling command had not succeeded in keeping the revolution on course. Nasser still proclaimed the urgent need of social justice and industrialization. But he appeared more interested in planning an expanded Arab empire from the Atlantic to the Persian Gulf. This preoccupation, rather than the critical economic exigencies of independence, seemed to take up more and more of his confident energies.

The most serious setback to the Egyptian dream of empire came two years ago with Iraq's decision to join the Western-sponsored Baghdad Pact. This move undercut the much talked-of plan for an all-Arab defense force sufficiently integrated to form an independent bloc and fill the vacuum left by the withdrawal of British forces from the Middle East. The romantic appeal of an Arab defense force was not sufficient to overcome Iraq's genuine fear that the Persian Gulf was still the center of Soviet aspirations. At the same time, the Iraqis were making economic progress. In this field Iraq had no need to look to Cairo. It threatened, in fact, to outdistance its overpopulated and impoverished rival.

Nehru's second thoughts

Further east in India, where Nasser had had a royal welcome in 1955 and had been personally escorted to Bandung by Prime Minister Nehru, it was reported that Nehru was having second thoughts about his new convert to neutralism.

There can be little question that Nehru was the principal influence in persuading Nasser to shift from tactical to doctrinaire neutralism. Up to the time of the Bandung Conference Egyptian non-alignment had been clearly designed to provide diplomatic bargaining power in Washington and London. After Bandung Egypt moved into the neutralist constellation led by Nehru in Asia and Tito in Yugoslavia.

India's alarmed reaction to Nasser's abrupt nationalization of the Suez Canal revealed some of the uneasiness that Nehru had come to feel over Nasser's interpretations of neutralism. For one thing, Indian neutralism does not ignore basic economic realities. This was made plain at the height of the furor over the fighting in Egypt in November. Krishna Menon pointed out to the General Assembly: "If the economic life of the United Kingdom depends very largely upon the free and open navigation of the Suez Canal . . . the economic life and even the existence in any kind of reasonable way of my country depends even more on free passage through the Canal." The success of India's second Five-Year Plan was seriously imperiled by the disaster at Suez.

Positive neutralism

Indian respect for economic realities has not been shared by Nasser. Whatever economic advice he has been receiving from some of the competent ministers around him, he obviously has not been taking it seriously. Instead of leading cautiously from Egyptian weakness, he has led more and more recklessly in the last year, to the desperate disappointment of many of the revolution's defenders both inside and outside Egypt. Beyond this he has adopted the familiar Asian double standard of measurement: any Russian move in international affairs is given the benefit of the doubt; any move by the Western powers, particularly by Britain, is suspect.

Given this legacy of distrust from Britain's long and unhappy occupations of Egypt, it has been understandable that new alliances with the NATO system would have small appeal in Egypt. Instead Egyptian resistance has hardened and gained the clamorous support of other xenophobic nationalists, notably in Syria. The merely negative resistance of the past has now developed into the new popular policy of "positive neutralism."

In retrospect, it seems clear that the Western powers, in deprecating the neutralist line, have appeared in Asian eyes to be resisting peaceful

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The Atlantic Report *on the Middle East*



change. Moscow, with a more flexible facility for detecting weather changes, hastened to champion the Bandung spirit. Nothing could serve Russian purposes better than the neutralist isolation of the Arabs from their traditional ties with the West. For this reason the exacerbation of Arab fears and resentments since November threatens to improve Russia's prospects and damage almost fatally those of the NATO powers.

From the historical point of view Gamal Abdel Nasser must be regarded as a symptom rather than a cause of nationalist extremism. His self-confident conviction that he could accept Russian arms without becoming a satellite figure, but that he could not accept Western ties without losing "sovereignty and dignity," must stand as one of the saddest reflections of Western failure in the Middle East. For the West had ten years, from 1945 to 1955, to prove its case and come to terms with Arab nationalism. In that period there had been no overt Russian penetration in the Arab countries and little successful infiltration.

The West's assumptions

In any reassessment of recent Middle East history three basic issues between the Arabs and the West stand out. One has been the West's preoccupation with cold-war strategy, in which the Middle East position is crucial but in which its needs and attitudes have been accorded second place. A second assumption by the European members of NATO has been that access to raw materials in Asia and Africa could only be secured by direct political control centered in the consuming countries. The third assumption has been that the introduction of a Western-oriented new state, Israel, could be effected peaceably in the Arab world.

These assumptions by the West have run counter to opposing assumptions in the Arab-Asian world. Most of that world is militarily helpless. It sees its best chance of resisting Communism by economic development and military neutrality. Since the alternative would be resumption of a secondary role in a Western defense system, most nationalist Asians resist this, expecting in some cases to be protected anyway by the West if war should come.

In the matter of raw materials, the new nationalist states of Asia and Africa are behaving like sovereign states — to the dismay and chagrin of their Western friends. For example, there has been a concerted drive by the Arab-Asian bloc at the United Nations to establish the right of self-determination in economic as well as political matters. Under the

Covenant of Human Rights, the tenth General Assembly approved a year ago an article which declared:—

"The people may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligation arising out of international economic cooperation based upon the principle of mutual benefit, and international law."

Since the Arab-Asian bloc, which secured the passage of this resolution in the face of united Western opposition, now numbers twenty-six members, it can be expected that similar moves involving control of resources will be made in the future. The whole question of reconciling the relationship of the consuming countries with Arab-Asian nationalist rights and expectations seems to call for more than the piecemeal approach so far accorded it.

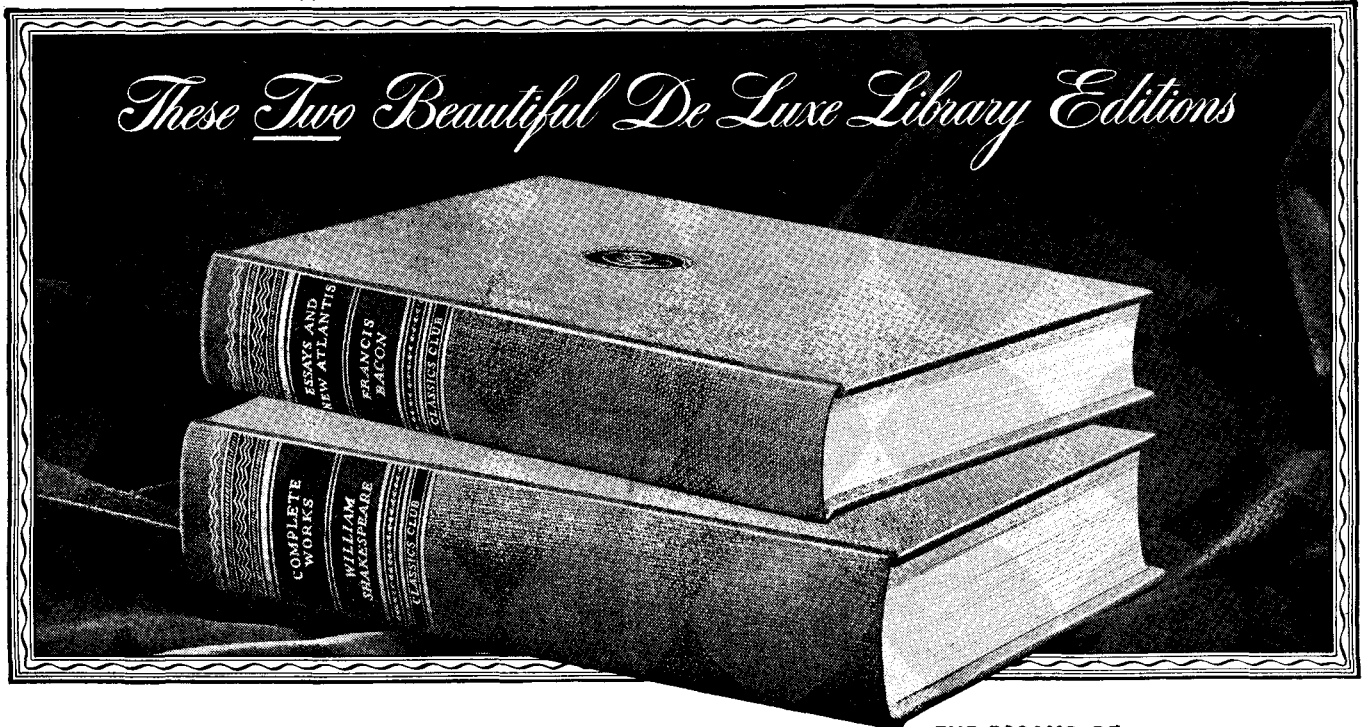
Hopeful signs

There are signs of a fresh approach in this field. There have been suggestions that the Suez Canal, for example, might be purchased and made an international utility. Another idea was that an international strip of territory from the Gulf of Aquaba to Gaza be established.

Such a proposal offers a combined partial solution to both the Suez and the Israeli disputes. It would separate Israel permanently from Egypt. It would provide an overland alternative to the Suez Canal. The so-called bridge between Asia and Europe would in fact finally come into existence, and Asian communications with Europe would be effectively neutralized. A secondary, but by no means incidental, result would be the possibility of a new and useful existence for many of Gaza's 200,000 Arab refugees, now increased by some 10,000 Egyptian refugees from the Canal zone.

Whether the thin line of blue-helmeted UN policemen now manning the Palestine armistice area are to be the first of a new permanent corps of guardians of a vital controversial strip, or only a temporary phenomenon, their rapid appearance has been a hopeful sign. For Israel, surrounded by more bitter neighbors than ever, the UNEF provides the best chance of survival and of a recasting of accounts. The policy of retaliation must be agonizingly reappraised and Israel's real isolation faced. Most serious for Israel is the expansion and increased consolidation of the Arab-Asian bloc at the United Nations, now sufficiently powerful, with Soviet aid, to control UN decisions on Israeli-Arab questions.

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Washington

THE new year begins with both uncertainty and anxiety about the future course of the Soviet Union and about the peace of the world. The past three years saw the emergence and the mutual recognition of a military and therefore of a political stalemate between the two great poles of world power, Washington and Moscow. But the events in Eastern Europe and the Middle East these past months—above all, the historic Hungarian Rebellion of 1956—have so shattered that quasi-stability as to produce more doubts in Washington about the events which lie ahead than was the case in any year since Eisenhower took office.

In the President's first term, Washington and Moscow each in its own way worked to lessen world tensions and to produce a period of peaceful though highly competitive coexistence. But the assumption that this would continue for many years was founded on the belief that Stalin's successors, whatever their personal power struggle, felt secure not only as the heads of the Soviet state but as the leaders of the Communist orbit, whatever the evolutionary processes afoot in that orbit.

Washington officials are not predicting war, but many of them believe that the Kremlin has been shaken and thrown off balance by the Hungarian Rebellion and that a dictatorship off balance is a highly dangerous thing. Many in the Capital agree with Milovan Djilas, the rebel former Vice President of Yugoslavia, who wrote in a magazine analysis which sent him to jail that the Hungarian Rebellion "placed on the agenda the problem of freedom in Communism—that is to say, the replacement of the Communist system itself by a new social system."

The American appraisal of Soviet decision-making over the decades has always been, in fundamental terms, that the Russians were coldly calculating in their risk-taking and both willing and able, unlike Hitler, to cut their losses because they had no timetable for achieving world supremacy. What worries Washington now is whether the Kremlin might become so alarmed over the consequences of the Hungarian Rebellion, not only in the satellites and among the neutrals they have

been so assiduously courting, but also at home, as to abandon calculation for frenetic action.

Hence the view of many in Washington that the fate of the world may hinge to a high degree on the way the United States now proceeds—on its diplomatic techniques and, above all, on the words and actions of President Eisenhower.

The President acts

The President is neither an intellectual nor a student of Soviet affairs. But he has demonstrated time and again a sort of visceral reaction to world events which has produced the highest order of statesmanship. During the combined Hungarian-Middle East crises in November he understood the absolute necessity of firmness without provocation, and acted accordingly.

He knew that the United States could not directly challenge the Soviet Empire by any form of intervention in Hungary, however much our inability to intervene was to dishearten both the rebels in that nation and many in the free world. He knew that the United States likewise must indicate to the Kremlin that it would "oppose" a Soviet attempt to enter the Middle East conflict through the device of "volunteers," but he was careful to avoid spelling out that opposition in advance. He alerted the American armed services, and let the Soviets know he had. But when the Pentagon, driven by its "Pearl Harbor won't happen again" complex, began to feed out military judgments, he ordered a halt lest they grow into provocation.

This is a narrow ledge upon which to tread. It kept Dwight Eisenhower at his desk more steadily than he had planned. But when the challenge came, and it came at the moment when Secretary Dulles was hospitalized, the President acted as Chief Executive, Commander-in-Chief, and Secretary of State as well.

The fall crises, however, sharply demonstrated the needs of 1957: stronger executive management of foreign affairs at the State Department, the National Security Council, and in the White House staff and the vital necessity of a new relationship

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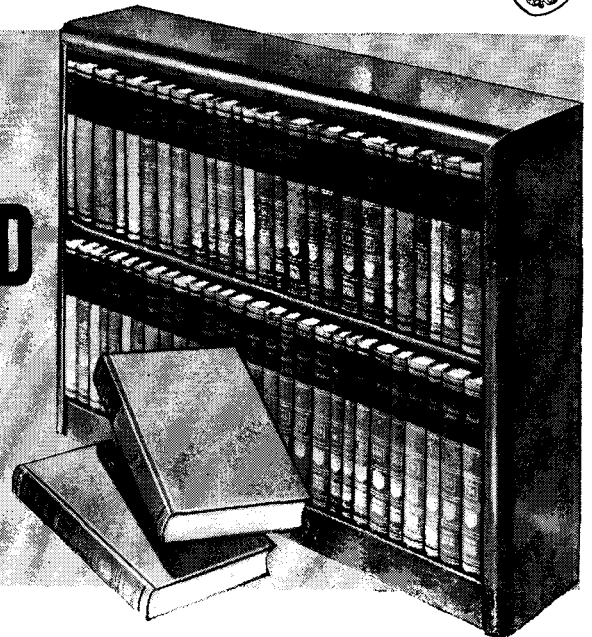


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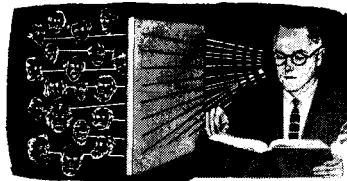
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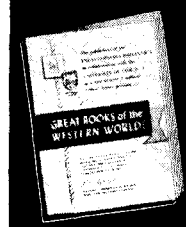
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with the Congress. The President acted, and acted to a very large degree on his own, at a time when the Congress was not only not in session but involved in an election campaign and its aftermath. But the American government cannot for long proceed in that fashion, nor is it Eisenhower's inclination so to proceed. Hence some important changes may be made.

More help with foreign policy

For many months some of the President's closest advisers, beginning with his brother Milton Eisenhower, have urged him to name a trusted associate to act as the White House foreign policy chief in much the same fashion that Sherman Adams functions in the domestic field.

White House assistants C. D. Jackson and Nelson Rockefeller, in turn, both fell short of that role. William H. Jackson came closer to fulfilling it but he, too, ran afoul of the State Department and the Treasury, especially of the conservative views of George Humphrey and his more limited followers, Under Secretary of State Herbert Hoover, Jr., and foreign aid chief John Hollister.

General Alfred Gruenther, in his new post as head of the American Red Cross, is expected to fill, in part at least, the role of White House politico-military adviser. And there are reports that Vice President Nixon may take over the post held by Hoover, not at State but as chairman of the little-known but important Operations Coordinating Board. The OCB is the arm of the National Security Council charged with seeing that NSC decisions — that is, the President's foreign policy decisions — are in fact carried out.

The National Security Council's machinery will be strengthened by the return of Robert Cutler, who had galvanized it early in the first Eisenhower Administration. Cutler's great limitation, however, is his almost unshakable belief that the press is a danger to government rather than a means of creating public understanding and support for policies, particularly for those which are seemingly unpopular and unpleasant.

Changes at State?

At State there is no doubt that Secretary Dulles will retain the top post as long as his health will permit.

The President's faith in him, though it may have been shaken by the collapse of Western coöperation in the Middle East, remains very great. But Dulles, however well he may recover from a serious operation at age sixty-eight, cannot be expected to regain the stamina he has demonstrated these past four years. A replacement for Hoover — perhaps retiring Massachusetts Governor Christian Herter, who served with distinction as a member of Congress on the House Foreign Affairs Committee — would help.

But what is even more needed, and even more difficult of attainment, is the use by the Secretary of the vast and all too often untapped reservoir of competence and ability within the huge State Department staff. Many of these men have frequently felt the highest degree of frustration because Dulles paid little or no attention to their thoughts and ideas and leaned so heavily on his own experience and on a tiny group of close associates.

Of these associates, incidentally, the rising star these past months has been Herman Phleger, the San Francisco lawyer who heads the department's legal division and whose similarity of approach and thought to Dulles's has deeply impressed the Secretary of State. Phleger has the lawyer's limitations, but he is a man of character and stubbornness who has not hesitated to challenge the Secretary's thinking.

Changes at the key embassies abroad are already afoot. The political necessities complicate the problem of filling a number of posts, and Eisenhower has yet to put his foot down on party demands for ambassadorships to generous GOP contributors. London especially has been a weak embassy, not only at the top but through much of the ranks. A change of faces in both London and Paris was certainly in order after the Middle East debacle, although Douglas Dillon in Paris has been an exception to the rule of mediocrity among political envoys.

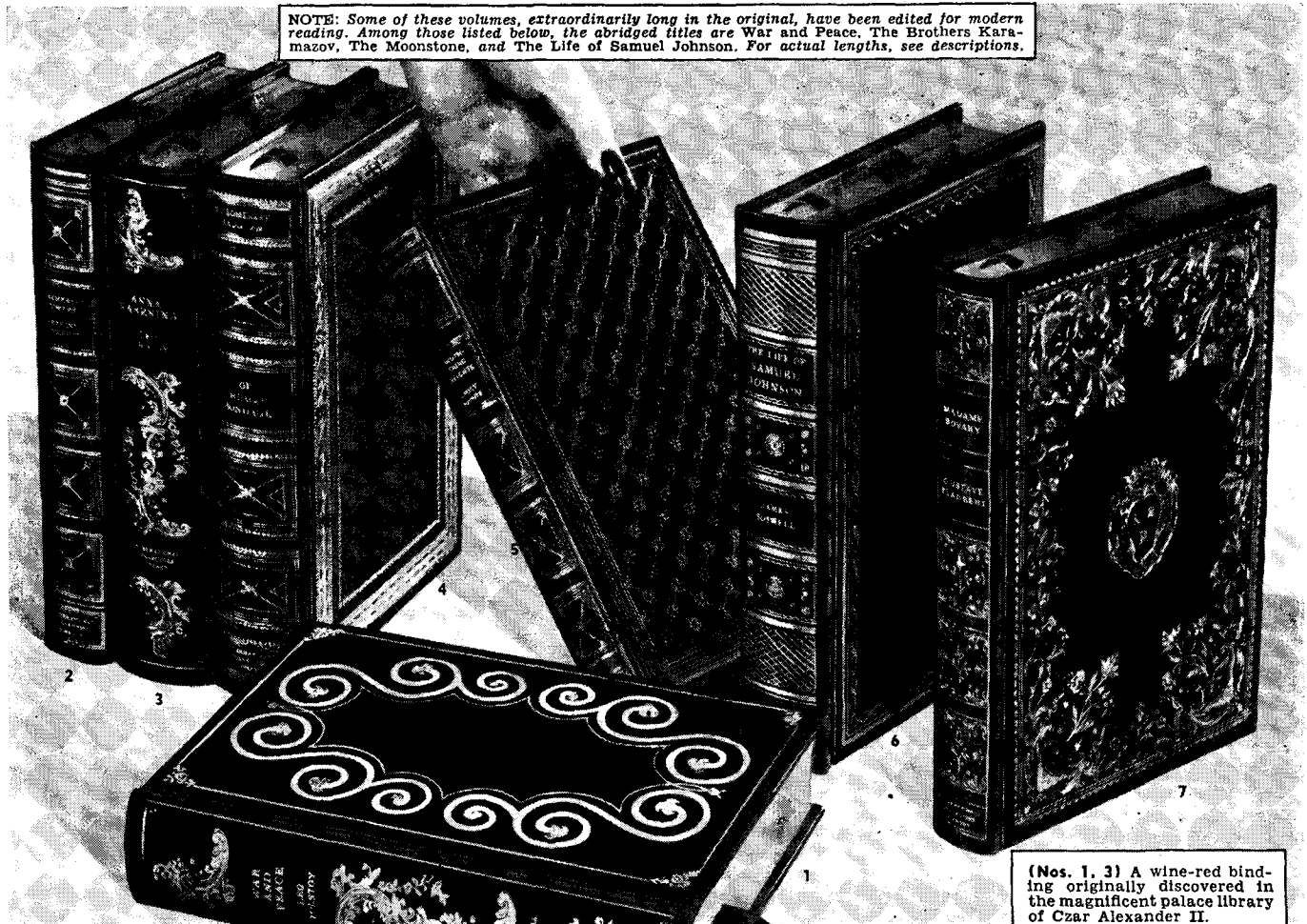
Trouble at the UN

The United Nations representation has been a particularly soft spot in the American diplomatic machine. Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., although a man of ability, has been personally antagonistic to so many foreign diplo-

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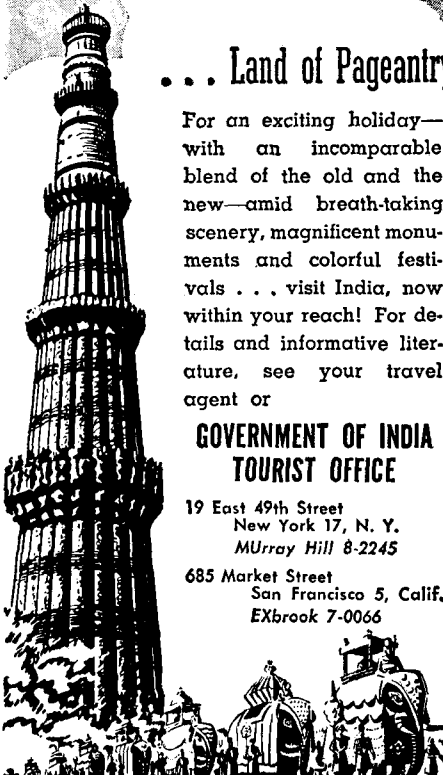
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mats as to jeopardize seriously his usefulness. Lodge's relationship with the State Department long has been unhappy. Of course, he has not been a free agent although he has tried to influence, as is his right, the policy decisions which he had to carry out at the United Nations.

Fundamentally, the problem lies with Administration policies, or lack of them, and the manner of their application. During the depths of the split in the Atlantic Alliance in November and early December, the most substantial criticism of our policy concerned the way it was handled. The French Foreign Minister told his Parliament that America is determined that there should be no split between white and colored nations in the free world and that Russia should not be allowed to be the champion of the colored nations.

This meant that the United States could not approve, even condone, Anglo-French action against Egypt. But it did not make it necessary to cut the Anglo-American ties so abruptly that there was no discussion for many weeks on how to accomplish the objectives shared by both nations — what kind of Suez Canal and Arab-Israeli settlements should be sought through the United Nations. The British Ambassador in Washington was treated more like the envoy of a minor Latin-American state.

Not enough diplomacy

White House officials say that the President, even in the moment of anger over the attack on Egypt, "never lost sight of who is the real enemy." But the way he and his subordinates conducted American affairs in those dreary weeks led the British and French people to believe just the opposite.

The President might, for example, have had Lodge explain the seemingly incredible fact that the United States was voting with Russia against its two chief NATO allies. Or better still, he might have done so himself. For it is a fact that personalities as well as policies and events shape international relationships.

The Administration might also have explained to the American public, either directly or through the press, the reasons for the split with our allies.

Before the assault on Egypt, the Administration felt that such an attack would be disastrous for the British and the French. Events have borne out that forecast. Yet just as the Administration never offered its allies in advance what they could consider a satisfactory alternative, so it failed to continue even the normal diplomatic relationships during the weeks following the attack — relationships which Washington very well knows are indispensable to the healing of the breach.

Will a new bipartisanship work?

The nature of the Eisenhower Administration's relationship with the new Congress on foreign policy is up to the President. With the departure of Senator Walter George, retiring chairman of the powerful Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the President is left with no supporters on the Democratic side. On the Republican side, he has Senators Wiley of Wisconsin and Smith of New Jersey. Senator Knowland's support can be counted on only occasionally.

The President must, if there is to be any sort of revival of bipartisanship, work out a new relation with such Democrats as Theodore F. Green, the 89-year-old Senator from Rhode Island, who succeeds George as chairman, and Senators Fulbright, Sparkman, Humphrey, Mansfield, and Morse, who follow Green in that order of seniority.

Of these men, all of whom have been vocal in their criticism of Eisenhower foreign policy in general and of Dulles in particular, Fulbright is the deepest student of foreign affairs. Humphrey is mercurial, as is Morse. Sparkman is too pedestrian. Green himself is often waspish and lacks influence on the Senate floor, having become a sort of senatorial exhibit of longevity alone.

The most important Democrat on the committee, at least until the day the youthful Fulbright succeeds the aged Green, is Mike Mansfield of Montana, for ten years a professor of Far Eastern and Latin-American history, who has made a name for himself by his attention to foreign affairs. Mansfield is an authority on the problems of South Vietnam; it was only at his insistence that support was not at one point withdrawn from Prime Minister Diem.

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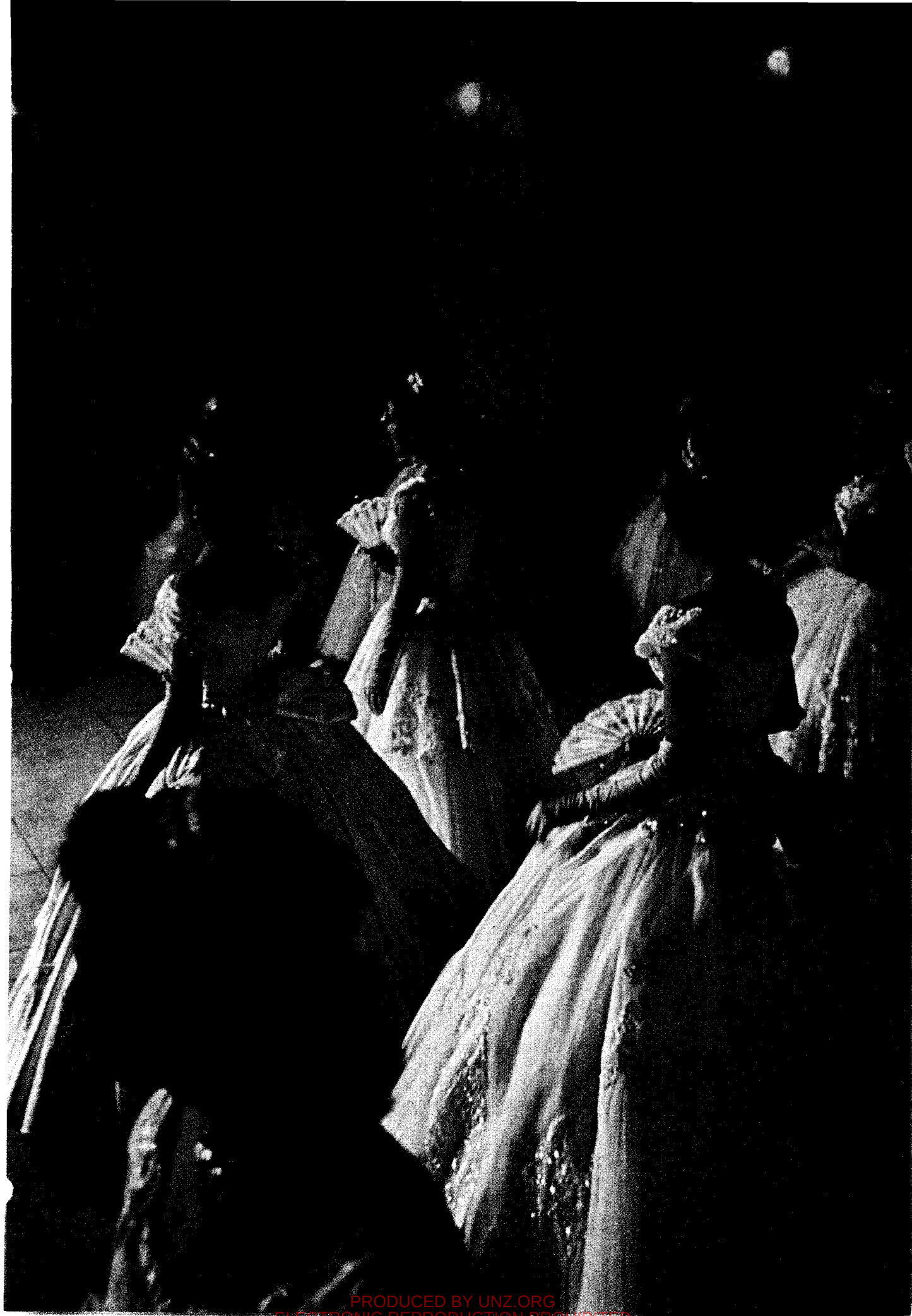
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Debutantes' Ball at the Casa de España in San Juan, the capital of Puerto Rico. Just beyond this ballroom are a library, an art gallery and a swimming pool. Photograph by Elliott Erwitt. ►





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But what will make Mansfield the closest thing to a Senate successor to George is his selection by the party leaders as the new Democratic whip, the number two post behind Majority Leader Johnson vacated by the defeat of Senator Clements.

Lyndon Johnson is a practical politician with little interest in or understanding of foreign affairs. In the past he was guided almost totally by Senator George's views and wishes. He is not likely to accord the same sort of deference to Mansfield, but if the Montanan can speak for the bulk of the committee Democrats, he will be the key man on foreign policy decisions.

Unlike most of his Democratic colleagues, Mansfield has had public words of praise for Dulles as well as criticism. He thus is in a position to work with Eisenhower and Dulles if the President so wills it.

Congress and foreign policy

But there should be no illusions about the conduct of American foreign policy. It is, constitutionally and in hard fact, an executive responsibility. Congressional actions in this field tend to be of a restraining and negative nature. It is all but impossible for the Congress to formulate foreign policy in any positive sense.

Nothing could be more demonstrative of the folly of congressional attempts to run foreign affairs than the efforts last summer, just before Congress adjourned, to legislate an end of aid to Tito's Yugoslavia. As a result of the compromise finally voted by Congress, the President was forced to make public, shortly before the election, affirmative findings about Yugoslavia of a sweeping nature. This step became necessary to enable the President to retain freedom of action in this important issue.

The subsequent turn of events in the satellites — the emergence of national Communism in Poland, as Tito desired, and the Hungarian Rebellion, which Tito approved until it swept past anti-Stalinism into anti-Communism — convinced most of Washington that the aid-to-Tito policy has been a major success. Yet it came within a few votes of being cut off by a Senate momentarily angry over the then current Tito-Khrushchev meetings in Yugoslavia and in the

Soviet Union, about which the senators knew little. As Tito has now revealed, these meetings in fact served to help force the issue of greater independence for both Poland and Hungary, as the senators themselves all desired.

The Yugoslav episode is the sort of thing that can be avoided only by the closest form of executive-legislative coöperation, especially necessary when the President is of one party and control of Congress is in the hands of the other.

Mood of the Capital

The pre-holiday visit of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of India came under considerably different circumstances than it would have if it had occurred in July as originally planned. There was criticism in Washington as elsewhere in the West, and among many Indians as well, of Nehru's initial failure to equate morally the Soviet intervention in Hungary with the British-French attack on Egypt. It was with considerable relief in Washington that the news was received of Nehru's second thoughts on Hungary.

The necessity of working out a new American relationship with the Asian neutrals for whom Nehru is the chief spokesman even though he is often resented as such by Asians outside of India is clear. But it has been transcended by the insight into the nature of Soviet Communism provided by the Hungarian Rebellion — an insight which Washington believes has not been lost among the important Asian politicians and intellectuals. The problem for the President thus became how to make use of this revelation in creating a new relationship between America and India and how to bring the two great nations closer together in their roles at the United Nations.

Concerning other visitors to the Capital, the President held off a request from the British and French Prime Ministers because he did not want to compromise the position of the United States in the Middle East as the single great power which had not taken sides. But this was a matter of timing, since such personal contact is regarded by the President as a necessity during the period when the Atlantic Alliance must be repaired.

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London

QUIZZED by a quartet of hostile newsmen on television, Transport Minister Harold Watkinson stayed cool and relaxed, answering questions quietly between long puffs at a Sherlock Holmes pipe. Just once he jerked forward and snapped an answer. When pressed and re-pressed about the full effects of the fuel cuts to come, he suddenly said, "Perhaps when they do come they will teach the people that Suez really is our lifeline."

Then Watkinson recovered both poise and the official Government line. The line has been to minimize the effects of Egypt. The crisis at first barely touched life in Britain, although it was obvious that motorists would find their gas rationed before long. The Government meanwhile was at pains to be reassuring. Fuel Minister Aubrey Jones explained that the first oil cuts to industry represented but a one per cent cut in the total fuel supplies. Chancellor of the Exchequer Harold Macmillan declared that there was no reason why the budget should be affected or his expected surplus of £400 million reduced.

But the country remembered uneasily the emphatic words of Eden earlier when he said that Middle East oil and Suez were "literally matters of life and death to Britain."

How much rationing?

The rationing scheme which was announced on November 20 gave motorists gas for 200 miles a month. Oil for non-industrial use and central heating was cut 25 per cent; diesel oil for tractors, fishing boats, and buses, 10 per cent. Rationing books run for an initial period of four months, giving some hope that Britain can get back to normal by spring.

All depends on three things: 1) how long the Suez Canal stays closed; 2) how long the flow of Iraq oil is reduced; 3) how much oil and other aid Britain can get from the United States.

At best, Britain need suffer only a slight, temporary inconvenience with oil supplies, and the situation will be more or less normalized by the time Britons come to take their cars and scooters to the Continent for their roving vacations. But at worst

— if the Canal is reblocked or British ships are banned or Middle East oil is cut off or American oil is not available in large enough quantities — wartime austerity could return and the whole future of the sterling area would be placed in jeopardy as Britain faced ruin. If it takes as long as six months to clear the Canal, an economic war — and perhaps a dangerous economic war — will develop in Europe.

Disquiet grew as Britain ran into early difficulties in buying American oil. Richard Crossman, a Labor Party M.P. and columnist of the *Daily Mirror*, wrote: "The United States is now employing economic sanctions against Britain and France." It looked to some Britons as if Ike were determined to cause Eden's fall. Would Nasser be allowed to emerge the victor? The British prepared to tighten their belts, for in spite of official confidence it seemed likely that things would get decidedly worse before they got even a little better.

Industrial oil is the cause of much concern. Britain ought to be able to get at least three quarters of the oil it would like. But while some industries use little, some, like steel and glass, use a great deal. Users who are low down on any scale of priorities will have to get along with 30 to 40 per cent less oil.

Again all depends on how long the Middle East trouble lasts. In the short run Britain is in a fairly good position to substitute other fuels for oil. Its coal stocks are higher than they have been for many years — an unexpected bonus due to the fact that in Britain, unlike the rest of Europe, industrial production this year has been static; so the country has not used as much fuel as expected. Britain, in fact, is in a stronger position to face oil cuts than the rest of Europe. Some countries, like Sweden, use much more oil in proportion. Italy depends 96 per cent for oil on the Middle East. German expansion has run down German stocks. None of these countries have any big share in international oil companies.

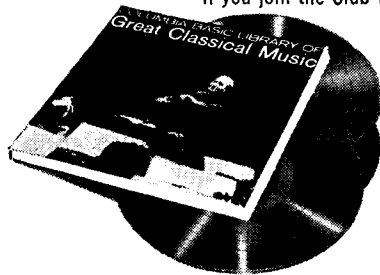
All the same, British unions are expecting one million unemployed by summer. The present num-

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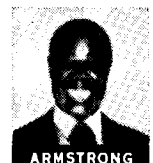
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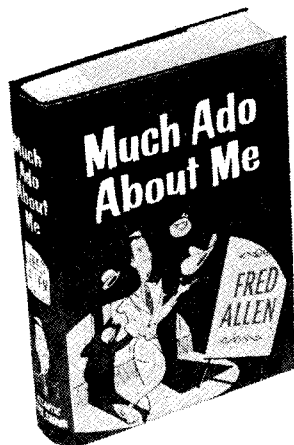
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LITTLE, BROWN

ber is 300,000. The unions are preparing to battle for jobs for their members. They are also preparing demands for wage increases to counteract the expected rise in living costs. Thus the greatest immediate threats to Britain probably don't come directly from oil, but from the increase in British costs, from the slowing of exports, and from the dollar emergency.

The price of oil may be rising, but it is more important to workers that the price of bread is rising, and the price of tea and wool, and of almost everything that must be carried by ship. Industrialists also sadly watch freight rates rising, thereby adding to the costs of rubber, copper, tin, lead, and zinc. They expect to be squeezed on all sides.

Working Britain out of trouble

One of the great questions of the new year is likely to be: Will labor, fired by patriotic zeal or simply by self-interest, throw back its shoulders and seek to work Britain out of trouble? Or will the political fight against Eden be reflected industrially?

Working out of trouble is not quite as easy as it sounds anyway. Vauxhall Motors, the British branch of General Motors, announced in November that it would have to cut production since cars are piling up at the docks, waiting for ships. For the same reason the Rootes group fired several hundred workers and put others on short time. Pressed Steel of Oxford fired 350 people. It was only the beginning as shipping grew scarcer.

It was fortunate that this series of blows to the export trade came after British exports had soared to record heights. The trade balance was in good shape just prior to the crisis. There was at least some room for maneuver. Yet the implications of delayed shipments and higher export costs could be very serious if the Canal should be blocked for a long time. Then Japan could begin to take over British supremacy in Southeast Asia and India.

Britain's own trade balance is not the only significant factor in the pressure on the sterling area. India and Ceylon already have a deficit. The effects of Suez must cause India's exchange position to weaken further and

may bring a serious food shortage and the threat of severe inflation. Ceylon, too, faces mounting import costs.

British dollar reserves, which are also the reserves of the whole sterling area, are thus beginning to come under external pressure. They are expected to drop below two billion dollars, which is considered a dangerous level, although they may be supported by drawing on the International Monetary Fund and perhaps on the sale of some U.S. securities held in Britain.

There is another factor to be considered — dollar oil costs dollars. The world oil industry is built in such a way that all oil costs are in dollars to some extent. But oil from North and South America costs more in dollars than oil from the Middle East. Britain is also losing sales of oil to America and Europe. The net effect of the new drain may be 20 to 30 million dollars a month. This can not be borne for long.

Uncertain as to the true American attitude, the British have wavered between thinking that Britain would have to go it alone because the Americans simply did not understand, and reassuring themselves that the United States just could not afford to see its strongest single ally go down.

On both sides of the Atlantic one thing was clear: the breach of understanding with the United States must be healed. Neither country could afford to let the Kremlin succeed in its efforts to break up the Atlantic Alliance.

Britain's restlessness

It may be proved that Western Europe cannot live in freedom without the United States. Nevertheless Europe in 1956 turned inwards, Great Britain with it. The close liaison with France over Suez was only one symptom of the process. There were others. There was the fact that the dollar gap had been giving way in urgency to the mark gap, as Western Germany piled up ever greater surpluses. There was the plan — initiated by the British government — that Great Britain should join an area of European free trade.

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composite of R. A. Butler and Hugh Gaitskell represented an identity of economic views held naturally by all moderates in a time when there "were simply no alternatives." But in the fall the Tories moved toward a new philosophy, touched with the magic of good old-fashioned liberalism. They were led by Mr. Butler.

The Socialists, searching for a new socialism, simultaneously moved left. They were led, perforce, by Mr. Gaitskell and escorted by the turbulent Aneurin Bevan, newly restored to eminence amid thunderous applause. And Suez made the Socialists more urgently "anticolonial" than before.

Change was in the air. And Great Britain became much preoccupied with greatness. Is it the smallest of the great powers, or the greatest of the small? Harold Macmillan assured it that it was "the second richest country in the world." Ahead of all, with the opening of the Calder Hall nuclear power station by Queen Elizabeth II on October 17, Britain was entering the atomic age. It had the H-bomb. Surely it could stand on its own feet? The question was asked again and again. On television a series "The British — Are We in Decline?" won peak ratings. The question fascinated Britons.

The startling ultimatum to Egypt may thus be seen as a gesture of independence. It may also be seen as a tragic gamble; as a resolute police action to halt war; as the alarm that woke the world; as a desperate act endangering peace. Time will produce the verdict.

The challenge of Germany

For Britain there is another incapable challenge — that of the West German mark. The Germans, with an understandable but almost pathological fear of inflation, maintain dear money by keeping interest rates higher even than those in Britain. And while British wages have been pushed up faster than British output, wages and output in Germany have kept pace with each other.

German prices are low, but buying is restricted. German exports boom while German imports are more or less static. The continuous reduction of tariff barriers and the lowering of taxes have not halted the continuing

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Mathematics of Space and Motion. Clifford: *The Science of Space, The Space Theory of Matter*; Euler: *The Seven Bridges of Königsberg, A Famous Problem*; Kline: *Projective Geometry*; Weyl: *Symmetry* (excerpt); Selections by Panofsky, and 6 others.

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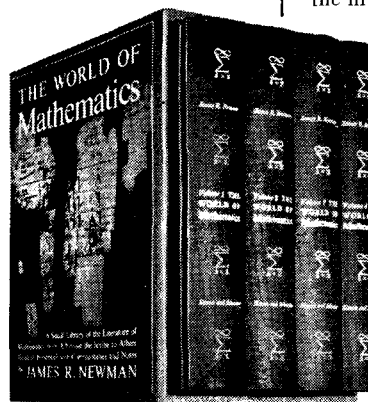
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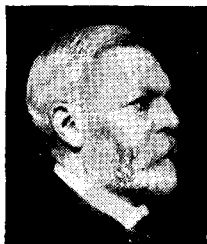
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The man who wouldn't give up



500 MASSED ROCKETS shook Brooklyn Bridge, screamed up into the May evening and showered the city with red and gold.

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This was a pity, for he had built it.

Which means that when money gave out, Chief Engineer Roebling pleaded for more. When disturbing changes of plan had to be made, Roebling fought them through. And when a hundred panicked men were trapped under the East River in a flooded caisson, Roebling saved them.

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pile upon pile of German surpluses. America has bridged the dollar gap with loans and Marshall Aid and defense aid. Must Germany do the same for the mark gap? An alternative, the upward valuation of the mark, would amount to a devaluation of the pound. Again Britain's position in the world is significantly involved.

This problem of balances of payment has clearly to be overcome before a free-trade area in Europe can pass the point of talk. Britain's reservations—it would exclude food and agricultural products from the bargain in order to maintain Commonwealth preferences—and its alliance with France, which would like to make exceptions of its own to protect its weak industries, have given rise to a rumor on the Continent that Britain, while pretending to join, really means to make the free-trade area impossible. The plan would die still-born from a surfeit of exceptions.

Yet Britain is genuine enough. Its skills are wasting for want of a big enough home market. It has to learn to be competitive. A common market among the six Schuman Plan countries, if it excluded Britain, would give untold advantages to Britain's competitors. It would be more difficult for Britain to compete outside the area than inside it or in partial association with it.

And the gradual introduction of such competition (over a period of twelve to fifteen years) fits with the new Conservative liberalism. The Conservatives are trying by taxes and credit restriction to force labor and capital from declining to expanding industries, from "home" to "export." They are also trying to bring more realism into the economy, the elimination of rent control being the latest example of that policy.

Inflation under control

To hold wages steady the Tories are offering industrial as opposed to national or state security, proposing for instance to establish "by legislation if necessary" a contract of service for every wage earner. This would include a right to adequate notice before dismissal according to length of service.

Labor troubles apart, in 1956, up to the Suez crisis, Macmillan had had a good year. Production might be

static but so were prices. Inflation seemed to be under control. Labor was beginning to move to what Macmillan considered the proper industries. The reserves teetered but at least there was a trade surplus of \$300 million in the first half of the year to offset a probable deficit in the second half. The middle-class revolt against high taxes with rising prices had simmered down.

Labor holds the key

The middle classes still hold the political balance. The key to the economic future, however, lies with labor. Great new wage demands are in the offing. The Labor Party has nailed up its plank of "more equality." Restrictions and price rises due to the crisis, coupled with the reduction of subsidies and the elimination of rent control, are expected to lead to stronger pressure than ever to raise wages irrespective of output. To labor, the squeeze seems mainly due to "Eden's war" as the *Daily Mirror* has slugged it.

One cheering factor is the split in the British Communist Party. This is directly due to the barbaric crushing of the revolt for freedom in Hungary. Never has the Communist Party's star been so low in Britain. Dockers in London, whose last two strikes were led by Communists, rough-handed two speakers who came to the Surrey docks to justify the Russians, tried to overturn their truck, and threatened to throw them in the river if they came back.

The British these days are not as phlegmatic as they have been thought to be. Liberace, drawn to London from Southampton in a special train, ran into uninhibited criticism from critics and unequalled adulation from idolaters.

When the movie *Rock Around the Clock* was shown in various British cities there were more arrests for disturbing the peace than for any other misdemeanor or crime. Thirty-seven young people were arrested in London for rock-and-roll riots on a single evening. Jive fans were restrained by police from tearing the Empress Hall, London, completely apart when Lionel Hampton played there, and rock-and-roll rhythm was wisely banned when "Hamp" moved on to Kilburn. Perhaps the national character is changing after all.



An Atlantic *Public Interest* Advertisement

The life insurance business in the United States has often been called a trusteeship for the millions of families and individuals who count on it for protection against income interruption. Here the Institute of Life Insurance tells the story of the role played by life insurance in adding not only to personal security but also to national progress in America.

IN THE INTEREST OF

103,000,000 AMERICANS

Down East, in Maine, a 65-year-old man and his wife wind up local affairs in preparation for retiring to Florida.

In offices of the nation's large airlines men revise flight schedules against the day when new fleets of planes signal conversion to the jet air age.

In the nation's capital a sleek streamlined train, New York bound, picks up speed as it crosses the yards at Union Station.

In southern Illinois a tremendous new hundred-million dollar plant supplies the power for an atomic energy installation on the other side of the Ohio River, and incidentally makes of a tiny hamlet a thriving, busy town.

In a small town in Wyoming a woman prepares to pay off the mortgage on the sheep ranch left to her by her husband.

On the West Coast a widow tells her tall young son yes, it will still be possible for him to finish college and go on to medical school.

And from coast to coast millions of families buy, build and improve houses and farms, in keeping with the American dream of owning a home of one's own.

The Common Factor

An economist might be able to put his finger on the single factor common to the background of each of these mid-twentieth century American situations.

Can you?

It is life insurance, acting as a creative mechanism. It is on the one hand the combined small savings of the many millions whose first objective as policyholders is to provide their dependents with financial protection against family income interruption. It is on the other hand the prudent investment of these savings by the life companies in nation-building skyscrapers and college buildings — power plants and railroads — highways and airlines — small retail enterprises and large factories — homes and farms from one end of the land to the other.

Life insurance is a business in which more Americans have an intimate and important stake than any other in the country. And each year the number sharing the stake grows and grows. In 1956 the nation's families, dealing with more than 1140 American life insurance companies with home offices in all 48 states and the District of Columbia, raised their ownership of life insurance to a new record level. By the year's end, more than 103,000,000 individual policyholders owned well over 250,000,000 policies. The policies represent more than \$400 billion in protection — or in the neighborhood of \$7,500 per family.

Since World War II, ownership of ordinary life insurance — largest single component of all life insurance in force — has more than doubled. Group life — second largest bulwark of the business — has grown almost five-fold during the same period, and now covers one out of every two members of the nation's work force. The smaller policies, represented by industrial life insurance, have expanded by 45%. And the newest form of coverage, credit life insurance — by which installment plan payments are protected in the event



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of the purchaser's death before payments are concluded — has been breaking its own record with each succeeding year.

The Picture in Perspective

To see it clearly and to see it whole, however, the life insurance picture today must also be viewed from the perspective of past performance and greater future family security. True, Americans are among the best-insured people in the world, and today more of them own more life insurance and annuities than ever before. But they are putting proportionately a little less of their income into their policies than did the previous generation. The ratio of premiums to income after taxes — at 3.8% in 1955 — is .2% less than it was before the depression.

What's more, the gain since 1929 in total life insurance in force — from \$102 billion to \$400 billion — is not as impressive as it might seem on the surface, quite apart from the depreciated dollar. In fact at the end of 1929 life insurance in force worked out to only about fifteen months of family income after taxes, and today's still equals only seventeen months of income.

Viewed from that angle, it is clear that many more strokes are needed on the canvas before the picture of family financial security through adequate life insurance is as bright as advancing America would like it to be.

Unchanging Functions in a Changing World

The first and foremost function of life insurance today is essentially what it was when the Presbyterian Church established the first life insurance company in the United States some 200 years ago. That is, of course, to cushion the economic effects of loss of income following the death of the family breadwinner.

But other values built into a policy are important, too. Premiums paid for protection over the years, for instance, add up to a store of personal savings upon which the policyholder can draw in emergencies. Or he can convert this cash value of his policy into retirement income when his family protection needs grow less.

In the meantime, each policyholder's yearly premium swells the stream of the nation's life insurance savings into a mighty river. A major function of the life companies is to channel these savings into productive investments in business, industry, agriculture and government. These in-

vestments earn interest that helps the companies to reduce the cost of insurance. Furthermore, the people's savings put to work in this fashion help to maintain and accelerate the growth of the entire economy. That in turn means a higher standard of living for everyone.

There are additional significant effects of life insurance in today's economy. In times of inflation, for example, premiums drain off extra consumer purchasing power that might otherwise add more fuel to the fire. In time of war, the life insurance companies can be depended upon to marshal their assets in support of extraordinary government expenditures. During World War II, for instance, at one point nearly half of all life company assets were invested in federal securities.

And at all times the companies cooperate in promoting the health, safety, and longevity not of policyholders alone, but of all the American people. Witness their contribution of almost \$9,000,000 to the Life Insurance Medical Research Fund during the last eleven years, to further heart research.

The Dynamics of a Popular Institution

For many American families, the benefits of life insurance have been apparent since the first commercial companies were chartered in the first half of the last century. But it was not until industrialization and urbanization signalled the passing of the traditional self-contained family economic unit that the concept began really to take hold. During this century the increase in the awareness of the modern family's need for life insurance protection has been steady. As a result, in terms of combined assets, geographical distribution, and number of companies and agents, the growth of the business has been phenomenal.

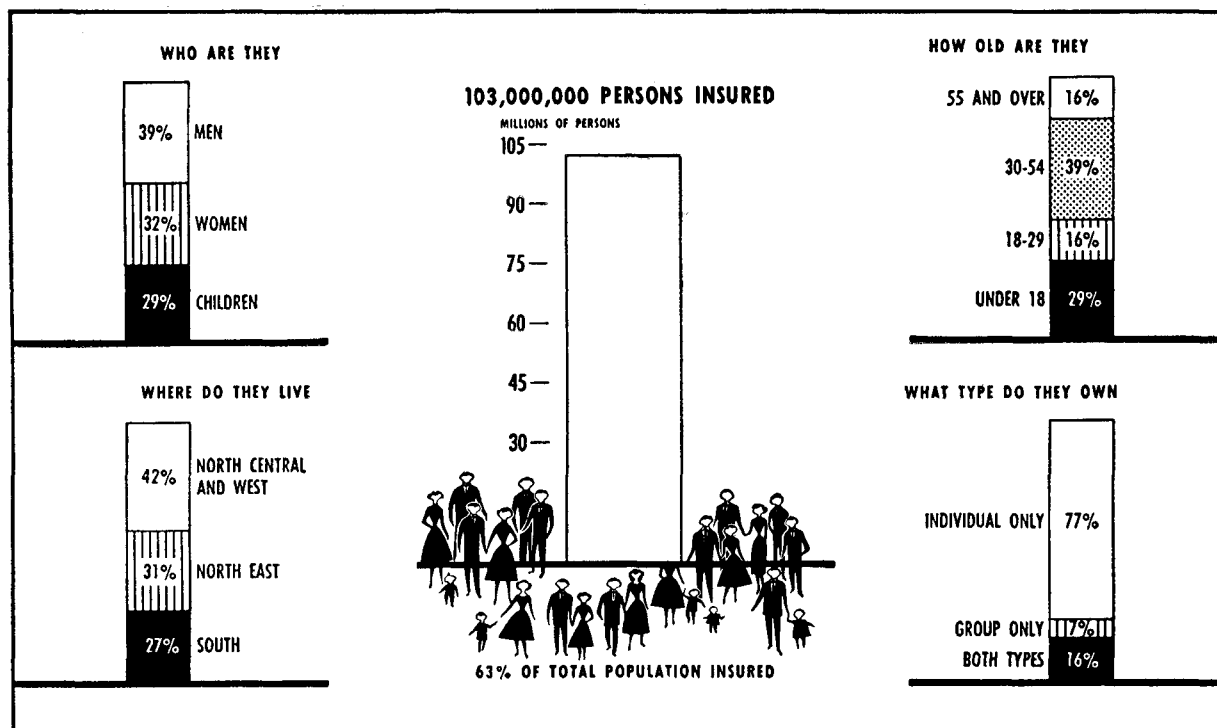
The explanation for the phenomenon lies in the fact that life insurance has performed basic and essential social services for the American people. The business as a whole has grown because it has served so many so well for so long. Its flexibility has spurred the development of new kinds of policies to meet new or newly appreciated needs. To name a few of the newer life services, there are family income insurance, credit life insurance, education insurance, and home mortgage redemption policies, all designed to broaden the security of the mid-twentieth century family.

Flexibility is also largely responsible for the fact



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Characteristics of Life Insurance Policyholders 1955



SOURCE: 1955 Survey conducted for Institute of Life Insurance by Survey Research Center, University of Michigan

that the vast majority of life insurance companies attained their present positions by organic growth rather than by mergers, by working individually to meet or anticipate different and changing consumer demands.

In 1900 there were 84 American life insurance companies, located mainly in the Northeast and Middle Atlantic states, with combined assets of \$1,742,000,000. Today there are over 1140, with at least one company in every state, main offices in over 275 cities from coast to coast, and combined assets of more than \$95,000,000,000. Growth in the number of companies established since 1940 has been at a faster rate than ever before in the history of life insurance. Growth in the share of the total business done by the smaller and newer firms has been steady since the turn of the century.

The older companies traditionally have made available to the newcomers much material bearing on mortality experience, underwriting practices and administrative and management problems. This cooperation has undoubtedly been a factor in getting the new companies off to a good start. Thereafter their vigor helped them expand in new and old areas of the ever-broadening life

insurance market, so that the rate of growth of these newer companies has been considerably faster than that of the older and larger companies. Moreover, among the older and larger companies themselves there has been considerable shifting around in relative ranks over the years.

Contributing their share to the process of advancement has been a growing army of highly trained agents employed as part of each company's effort successfully to attract and serve the consumer. There were 128,700 full time agents at the end of World War II. There were 189,600 — 5,500 of them women, incidentally — only a decade later. And through special courses and other educational opportunities they were far better equipped to advise families and individuals about custom-tailored life insurance programs, and to be of continuing service as the needs of their clients change.

The life companies vie not only with each other in their quest for new business. They also compete for their share of the consumer dollar with all other types of savings opportunities, including banks, savings and loan associations, mutual funds, private pension plans, government bonds, home



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ownership, and so forth. Thus, although savings have grown at a more consistent pace in life companies than in any other institution, they account for only about one-tenth of America's total annual savings.

Under the Microscope

Even so, the life companies have been and are the guardians of precious billions of the people's dollars. That being the case, it is natural that within the past fifty years the life insurance business has come in for its full share of governmental scrutiny, to guarantee that it is living up to its responsibility to serve the public interest.

But scrutiny of the many operations of the business neither begins nor ends with special governmental inquiries. It has been said that life insurance is an enterprise that is conducted with the shades up all over the house. For it is a matter of record that the watchful eyes of insurance commissioners or superintendents in every state and the District of Columbia are continuously on every major aspect of the business.

So it is that legal supervision as well as managerial choice restricts the companies to certain types of investments. In addition the position of the companies as trustees for their policyholders makes them seek primarily safety of principal, together with as large and stable investment income as is compatible with safety. Over and above that consideration, the companies' responsibility to the nation as a whole, as a major source of investment capital, makes them weigh carefully the potentialities for general social and economic progress that exist in any given investment opportunity.

Within these limitations, the list of productive investments made by the life companies is an impressive footnote to the unique chronicle of the nation's tremendous growth during the past century. In point of fact, life insurance funds have always flowed to those sectors of the expanding economy where they were needed most. As the railroad and later the public utility industry became seasoned, for example, substantial amounts of life insurance funds were channeled into those areas. Similarly, life insurance funds are important factors in the development of pipelines, aviation, turnpikes, manufacturing enterprises, urban and rural housing, and small business.

Forecast: Fair and Broader

If the life insurance buying record of the past decade can shed any light on what we may expect in the next, a look into tomorrow is encouraging. By 1965 life insurance in force in this country may well exceed three-quarters of a *trillion* dollars, almost doubling today's figure. Translated into less astronomical figures, that means that the average family will own \$12,000 in life insurance in 1965, compared with about \$7,500 today.

That substantial gain in voluntary financial protection could not stand as an isolated phenomenon on the American scene. It must be one of many important reflections of the economic and social development that can and will distinguish this nation further as it moves forward into the latter half of the twentieth century. But it will also be a reflection with personal meaning to almost every man, woman and child in the land. For broadened life insurance programs will contribute largely to a greater individual family security than the country has ever known.



ATLANTIC *Rebelle*

THE ISSUE OF RACIAL SEGREGATION

In our November issue we published two articles dealing with segregation: "Mixed Schools and Mixed Blood" by Herbert Ravenel Sass and "Where Equality Leads" by Oscar Handlin. Most of the correspondence on this subject disapproved Mr. Sass's views. The letters that follow fairly represent the opinions expressed by our readers.

—THE EDITORS

SIR:

As an historian concerned with Latin America I must take exception to Mr. Sass's use of racial intermixture there to explain levels of culture and degrees of progress. It is simply not true to say that Argentina and Uruguay have "outstripped the far more numerous American mixed-blood nations in most of the achievements which constitute progress."

Is Uruguay more advanced than Brazil or Chile or Mexico? Perhaps in some respects, economically in particular; but not in art, literature, architecture. Certainly the presence of Indians and Negroes, as well as Portuguese, has a great deal to do with the nature of Brazilian civilization, but I have never read in any reputable study that Brazil has a culture inferior to that of Argentina, or that the progress of Brazil has been retarded because of miscegenation. Would it be fair—would it even make sense—to assert that Bulgaria and Albania have not advanced to the same level of civilization as that found in England *because* Bulgarians and Albanians are overwhelmingly of the white race?

DAVID P. LEONARD
Mount Holyoke College
South Hadley, Mass.

SIR:

Mr. Sass has made rather glaring misinterpretations of facts of sociology, biology, and psychology. Not the least of these is his reference to what he terms "the instinct of race preference." He suggests that "preference is a natural reaction to facts and conditions observed or experienced, and through the action of heredity generation after generation it becomes instinctive." Can it be that, as an educated man, Mr. Sass is not aware that instincts in the human animal are virtually nonexistent, some authorities holding that sucking is the only behavior which can properly be so named? Moreover, it is universally accepted that there is no genetic mechanism for the transmission of learned behavior patterns (such as race preference) to successive generations.

Actually, Mr. Sass refutes himself on this point when he subsequently states that race preference is "a nearly universal instinct . . . one of those instincts which develop gradually as the mind develops and which, if taken in hand early enough, can be prevented from developing at all." This is absurd. By definition, an instinct cannot be a learned thing, nor can it develop in an individual.

JOHN H. STOFFER
CAROLYN J. STOFFER
Boston, Mass.

SIR:

It is unfortunate that the States' rights question has been so completely tied to the integration problem. States' rights is a different constitutional question, and an important one. By binding an indefensible stand

to a reasonable one, Southerners are asking for defeat on both. Mr. Sass and others like him are doing the South a disservice. As a displaced white Southerner, I hope that there are others who recognize this.

CARTER JEFFERSON
Chicago, Ill.

SIR:

I am now using Herbert Ravenel Sass's article for my classes in sociology and anthropology. It is the finest example of racial prejudice that I have been able to find in recent literature. Mr. Sass illustrates clearly every trait of the strongly prejudiced person in which one might be interested. He has truly best shown his prejudice by putting his attitudes on such public display and still being totally unaware of their strong emotional, irrational, and unscientific character.

IRA L. REISS
College of William and Mary
Williamsburg, Va.

SIR:

I am very grateful for the article by Herbert Ravenel Sass. It is the only presentation of its case that I have seen.

As a working newspaperman for many years, I have been haunted by a conviction that critical issues sometimes do not get debated in the U.S. press, and the desegregation issue is an excellent example. It seems strange that I should have had to wait until this late date to find a fair statement of the case against desegregation. Everything that I had previously seen took the line that right and justice were all on the side of the Supreme

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Court ruling, and that the opposition was merely recalcitrant and obstructive. But as with many previous issues, I found that in the back of my head was a persistent suspicion that there must be a lot on the other side that I wasn't being told.

Mr. Sass has given me what I wanted: the weight for the other side of the balance, the material with which to form a judgment. I am a good deal impressed by his arguments, particularly his example taken from South American intermarriage of Spaniard and Indian, to the apparent detriment of both.

Wisdom is not easy, in this matter as in most. But with the kind of information I had before reading Mr. Sass's article, it was impossible.

THOMAS H. B. ROBERTSON
Springfield, Mass.

SIR:

Professor Handlin is right when he indicates that the Negro is not interested in amalgamation. All the Negro is interested in is his constitutional rights as promised all citizens in the Fourteenth Amendment.

REV. S. PEYTON MANNING
*The Methodist Church
Gaithersburg, Md.*

SIR:

More good may come from "Mixed Schools and Mixed Blood" than from Mr. Handlin's rebuttal. The narrowness and the emptiness of the arguments for segregation are too clearly in view, destroying Mr. Sass's hopes that once the "explanation" is revealed our people will flock to the support of segregation in the schools.

ALFRED GRAY REID
San Francisco, Calif.

SIR:

Surely you have done the country a service by publishing a truly Southern article like that of Mr. Sass on our race problem.

It is all very tragic down in this country. Here in Columbia we had an interracial group where men of good will of both races used to meet and discuss how we could ease Negro problems. We got playgrounds, a municipal swimming pool, Negro policemen, and other things the Negroes should have had. But our organization withered on the vine after the Supreme Court's decision. Like the quality of mercy, that kind of thing cannot be forced.

I know there are thousands of good

people in the North who have never lived in a community with a very large percentage of another race. To them it is a simple matter of justice because in them the race instinct has not been aroused. Thomas Jefferson said, "Justice is in one scale and self-preservation in the other." A terrible dilemma for any people.

But you have done a courageous and generous thing in giving publication to our side, and I thank you.

R. BEVERLEY HERBERT
Columbia, S.C.

SIR:

Mr. Sass in his article speaks of "the leftist-liberal taboo which has practically sealed the lips of geneticists." I am getting sick and tired of hearing and reading implications that every move to improve our civilization is leftist-inspired.

HELEN ANTONIADES
Brooklyn, N.Y.

SIR:

It is truly unbelievable that the *Atlantic* could print such a flamboyant display of ignorance on its pages. Never before have I read the equal of Herbert Sass's epitome of unscientific illogic.

LEWIS TURCO
Storrs, Conn.

SIR:

Read Mr. Sass's article under this light: No one who wields power over others is going to give up this power unless it is forcibly taken away from him. Throughout this article the position of the white man's power in the South is pointed out. The rest of the article is drivel, nothing but rationalization to justify this view.

ELI C. STEFFY
Minneapolis, Minn.

SIR:

Mr. Sass is right in condemning Northern segregation of Negroes. Can anyone claim that Negro children living in the vast ghettos to which we still limit them, for the most part, have equal opportunity with the children living in suburban white areas? As surely as the Southerners who oppose integration, we Northerners who, by means which we rationalize, keep Negro families out of our neighborhoods and communities are disobeying the Supreme Court decision.

MRS. LORENZ HANSEN
Upper Darby, Pa.

SIR:

The one drawback I find in the article by Herbert Ravenel Sass is that the author should have carried his theme more vigorously over to his title, calling it perhaps "The Overwhelming Superiority in Sexual Attraction of Negroes for White Persons of the Opposite Sex." This, although a bit clumsy, would completely expose the absurdity of his position, which would be laughable were it not for its malevolence.

MRS. M. SHINBROT
Menlo Park, Calif.

SIR:

As a Northerner who spent twelve years in the South, I should like to say that Mr. Sass's thesis is typical of all that is worst about the Southern attitude — hypocrisy thinly veiled by pseudo service and pseudo patriotism.

MRS. MARJORIE B. DUNLAP
Dracut, Mass.

SIR:

The article by Herbert Ravenel Sass in the November *Atlantic* is sensible, dignified, and temperate. Mr. Handlin's article on racial segregation in the same issue is the diametrical opposite.

JAMES E. GODKIN
Beaufort, S.C.

SIR:

The problem of integrating schools down here is a very difficult one; so is the problem of bringing social justice into all of our race relations. But you in the North should not forget for a moment that the reason the problem is so great is the long history of neglect of the rights of the Negro by the white Carolinians. Above all, don't fall for the "Do you want your sister to marry a Negro?" answer.

(Because of the Citizen Council sponsored boycott of persons expressing any disagreement with its views on this subject, if you desire to publish this letter, please do not use the writer's name or the name of the city or his profession.)

South Carolina

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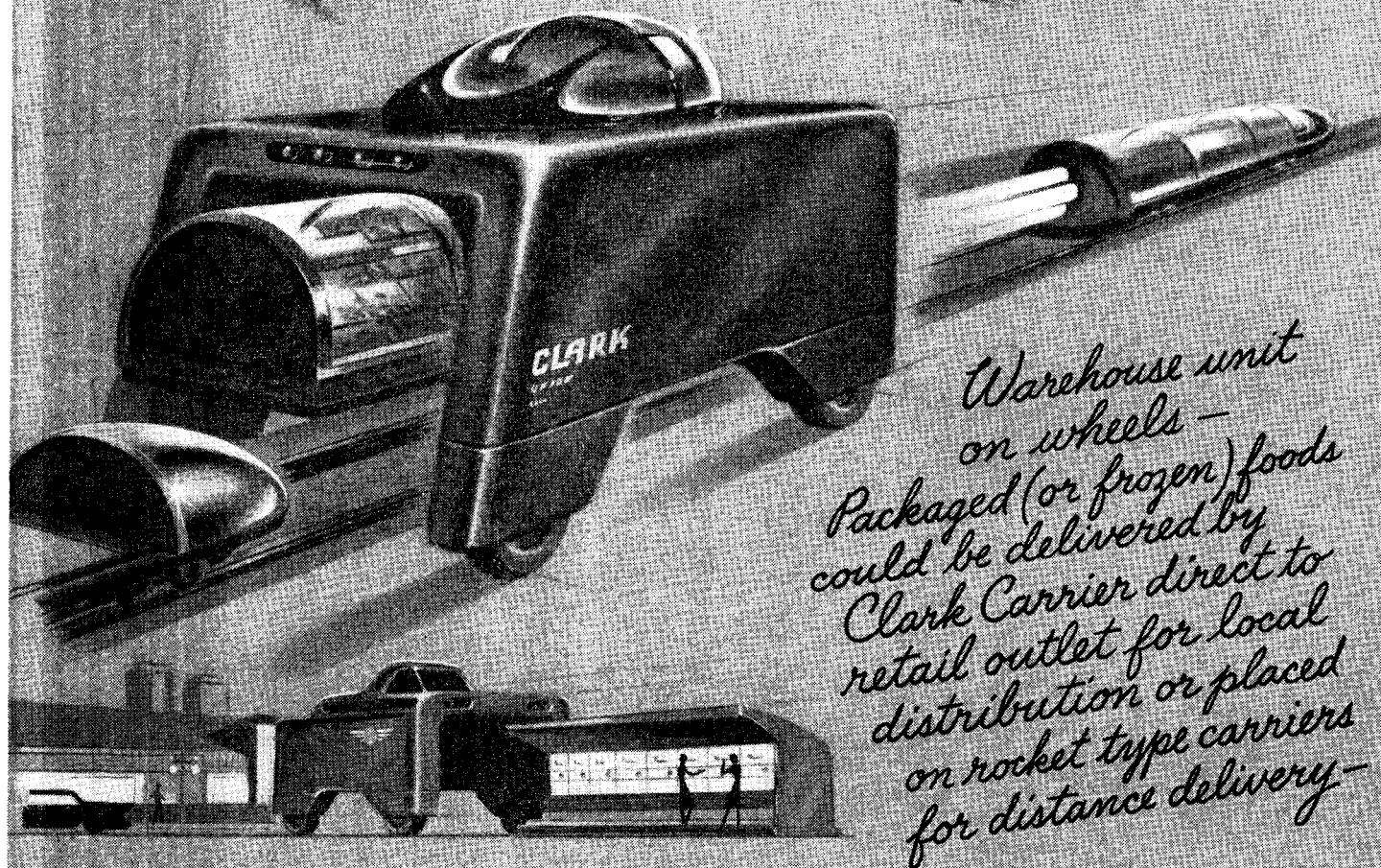
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An English authority on Soviet affairs, EDWARD CRANKSHAW was in Warsaw when the Satellite Revolution boiled over; he had seen it coming and wished to be on the spot when the break occurred. The article which follows was written in the Polish capital and, coming to us airmail, was the last piece of copy in this issue to go to press. Mr. Crankshaw is the author of three books widely read on both sides of the Atlantic: Russia and the Russians, Cracks in the Kremlin Wall, and his recent Russia Without Stalin.

EYEWITNESS IN WARSAW

by EDWARD CRANKSHAW

I WRITE these words in Warsaw. Only a few weeks ago the Communist leaders of Poland, swept forward and upheld by a tidal wave of popular emotion, defied the somber phalanx of Soviet bosses, flown posthaste from Moscow to put the Poles in their place, and told them to go home. The Russians went. They took one look at the situation, understood for the first time the deadly seriousness of Wladislaw Gomulka and his colleagues, revised their preconceived ideas with commendable promptitude, threw questions of face to the winds — and went away.

While they flew off in the cold October dawn (they had only arrived the previous afternoon), the Polish Communists resumed the interrupted session of their Central Committee plenum and proceeded to vote into the office of First Secretary that Mr. Gomulka whom Stalin had always distrusted and then tried to kill. At the same time they dropped Marshal Rokossowski, their Minister of Defense appointed by Stalin. Then, through Mr. Gomulka, speaking in public for the first time since his release from prison, they proclaimed a far-reaching series of reforms, exposed the disastrous economic situation to which Soviet overlordship had brought them, and announced that henceforth they proposed to treat with the Soviet Union on an equal, but amicable, footing. They did all this while Soviet troops and tanks, brought out of their lairs by Marshal Koniev to support the demands put

forward by his masters in the Kremlin, were still loose in the Polish countryside, and while Soviet warships were demonstrating off the Polish ports.

It was a stupendous victory, the greatest achievement of any nation since 1945; but at the time the Polish government played it down, not wanting, for obvious reasons, to heap public humiliation on their Soviet allies. It changed, in a night, the course of history and transformed the face of international Communism. But the fact of this great victory, this positive climacteric, was soon to be obscured (though not obliterated; far from it) by the smoke and flames of Budapest — and by the autumn madness which afflicted catastrophically the Prime Minister of Great Britain, plunging the Western world into confusion at the moment when clarity, imagination, and vision were demanded as never since the worst days of the war.

So it is that in Warsaw now nobody can guess the magnitude of the events of these past weeks, and nobody can see the wood for the trees — or Russia for the tanks.

Heaven knows what will have happened — in Poland, in Hungary, in the Middle East — before these words can be printed. And so the most sensible way to write about Poland today, and Hungary, is to sort out and emphasize what has already been done. This is not raking over past history. It is not falling behind the times in a period of swift and incalculable movement. The ones who fall

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behind the times are those who think that the latest news, the latest surface changes, are what matter. For the point to be grasped above all others is that what has happened during this past month in Warsaw and in Budapest *has happened*. Poland and Hungary may be submerged tomorrow, may already be submerged by the time these words appear, by the irresistible flood of the Soviet army. But what has happened cannot be taken away. And as the shouting dies down we shall see that, without most of us knowing it, we have crossed, on the backs of the Hungarians and the Poles, one of the great watersheds of history.

2

LET us look back to February, 1956, when Khrushchev demolished the Stalin legend in secret session at the Soviet Party Congress and the Poles started quickly to respond. Already, for some time past, the Polish intelligentsia, or part of it, had been showing signs of almost reckless boldness. Poets were printing verses which in Russia would have been taken for high treason; but nothing happened to these poets, or to the editors who printed their verses. There was a tentative stirring through the land. Outwardly nothing had changed. The Party had the country firmly in its grip. Edward Ochab, the First Secretary, was to all appearances a convinced Muscovite, bleakly bleeding his own country white for the benefit of the Soviet Union, supported and upheld by the all-powerful UB, the security police modeled directly on the Soviet MVD and brothers to the AVO of Hungary.

How was it possible for independent and critical voices to make themselves heard, however faintly, in this dead and blighted replica of the Soviet land? They did indeed make themselves heard, however; and they were not silenced. And this could mean only one thing: that appearances were not all, that the Party in its highest reaches had become infected with the new virus, that at least some powerful figures apparently absolutely loyal to Moscow were having doubts, or at the very least that they were misinterpreting the mood of Moscow. Thus when the Khrushchev speech was made known it fitted easily into an already existing mood, and the response was immediate and dramatic.

We do not know to what extent the "nationalists" of the Polish Communist Party believed that by permitting some freedom of thought and expression, some governmental experiment, they were obeying Khrushchev's directive, or to what extent they used his words as a pretext for putting into practice their own new ideas. This hardly matters now, because events have in any case overtaken the Polish Communists. Certainly for a long time they made no official move to disassociate them-

selves in any way from their Moscow-dominated past. Government went on as before; the UB continued to flourish; the crippling Five-Year Plan continued, condemning the Polish people to dire poverty and sometimes hunger; the foreign policy of Poland was geared precisely to the foreign policy of the Soviet Union: the Polish foreign office, indeed, was nothing but a branch of the Soviet foreign office.

Mr. Gomulka, lucky to be still alive, was released from prison, but the Party, including Ochab, continued to condemn explicitly the policies for which he stood and for which he had been cast out. The monolith, in a word, was still to all appearances intact; Poland was still a little Soviet Union, enjoying a milder regime, it is true, with the development of the Khrushchev new look, but still in chains.

Appearances were deceptive. They deceived not only the West; they also deceived the Russians. Because Poland is not Russia.

The Soviet Union has indeed undergone radical changes since the death of Stalin, and particularly since the crucial 20th Party Congress last February. But these changes have been Russian changes. I am going to indulge in a gross oversimplification because, in the space available, it is the only way to make clear the sort of thing that has been going on in Poland — the nature of the Polish changes (and the Hungarian) as opposed to the nature of the Soviet changes. The difference is the difference between Poland and Russia.

The Russian changes have been, like all change in Russia apart from periodical popular explosions, organized and directed from above. It would be inaccurate to say that in the Soviet Union there has been no pressure from below toward liberalization. Of course there has been; but this has taken the form of passive resistance to Kremlin policies rather than a positive impetus toward a better life. Throughout the length and breadth of Russia (as distinct from certain of the national republics) there has not been a flicker of the spirit which pushes men to the barricades, there has been no burning call for freedom — only an insistent, dull, sulky demand for amelioration.

There is no nobility in this demand, no pride. The Kremlin was forced to take it into account. And the Kremlin was also forced to take into account the paralysis of will and initiative, of mind and spirit, induced by the dead hand of Stalinism. The Kremlin, in a word, had to make calculations: how much liberalization, how much relaxation of detailed control from above, how much in the way of material incentives, were necessary to wake the country up and give the people, from the intelligentsia to the peasants, from government officials to factory hands, a more active interest in life.

The Kremlin made its calculations. Different leaders clearly had differing ideas, and conflict ensued. There was a good deal of experimentation

on a trial-and-error basis and this continues. In some spheres of activity, notably in the arts and particularly the theater, the government had to restrain individuals from pushing ahead too fast; in others, notably in industry and the civil service, it is still having to push, to coax, to cajole, even to threaten individuals who are too slow in exploiting the new opportunities. But the broad generalization remains: the changes have been initiated from above and the people take what they are given.

How different the picture in the satellites!

I have no doubt at all that Khrushchev and his friends had it in mind simply to extend the immemorial Russian process to the countries of Eastern Europe. In each of those countries there was a Communist government, loyal to Moscow, firmly in control. Each of those countries suffered acutely from the Stalinist paralysis. They were not pulling their weight in the economy of the Soviet bloc. They were suffering from overcentralized control. They, too, were to share in the new mood of relaxation. And I have no doubt at all that, as Khrushchev saw the picture, the requisite changes would be ordered and organized by the governments in power — as they had been by the Kremlin government — and the people would take what they were given and like it. The people, however, were not Russians: they were Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, Bulgarians, Rumanians, and Albanians, and so were their leaders, who knew their own people better than Khrushchev knew them. They knew, that is to say, that outside Russia change and revolution come from below; that people, driven to extremity, are prepared to die for a word called Freedom; that bread and circuses are not enough.

This, as I have said, is an oversimplification; but it has a good deal of the truth. The love of freedom burns with varying degrees of intensity in different countries, but in all more than in Russia.

3

AT ANY rate, the new look in the satellites did not go according to plan, Moscow plan. Some governments resisted the new mood — the Czechoslovak government above all, and the Bulgarian, and, for a time, the Hungarian. Why? Partly no doubt because the Party bosses in these lands were by no means sure that the new look would last in the Soviet Union; but still more, I think, because they knew very well that the slightest relaxation spelled danger, and that if they were to retain their own positions they had to be circumspect indeed. The Hungarian situation was complicated by the importunities of Marshal Tito, who was determined for reasons of his own to bring Rakosi down. But the Czechs, the Bulgarians, the Rumanians, and the Albanians managed to a very considerable extent to ignore the Khrushchev directive and to play down the new mood. The same applied to

the East Germans (the Communists of both East Germany and Czechoslovakia were helped by increasing prosperity, due to the advanced condition of their industries). Only in Poland and in Hungary — in Hungary largely because of Marshal Tito — was the new mood allowed to penetrate effectively.

Why in Poland? Obviously because parts of the Communist leadership became infected with the virus of freedom, no doubt appalled at the fearful mess they had made of their country's economy under direct orders from Moscow, no doubt also influenced by the traditional hatred of Russia. At any rate, in Poland all this year there has been a ferment. And this ferment first found expression in the press — in the controlled press of a Communist satellite. For months while the official Party daily, *Tribuna Ludy*, was dishing out the official Moscow line, other papers — above all the revolutionary weekly, *Po Prostu*, and to a lesser degree the Warsaw daily, *Zycie Warszawy* — were discussing and criticizing with increasing boldness the facts of life as lived in Poland. The revolution in Poland — already called by the Poles, half triumphantly, half ironically, “the new October Revolution” — was begun and largely carried through by the press: by journalists, vulnerable and exposed, in a totalitarian land.

And then came Poznan and the parting of the ways. The riots were, above all, against exploitation, against the wretched living conditions imposed by the Soviet overlordship. But they were also against Russia, as such; against the detested UB; against those elements in the Communist Party which lived hand in glove with Russia. The riots were an explosion, and they were all the more formidable because the explosion had been pent up for so long. They gave the red light to those Polish leaders who were not color-blind. The parting of the ways was between those Communists who recognized the irresistible force behind the explosion — a force building up not only in Poznan, but everywhere throughout the land — and those who believed it had blown itself out and all that was needed to put the lid back again was a show of resolution and force.

Somewhere in the background at this time was Gomulka, readmitted to the Party after his long disgrace and imprisonment but still possessing no executive power. It was the presence of Gomulka, who, as a martyr and in spite of his rigorous Communist past, was fast becoming a national hero and symbol, which acted as a sort of catalyst. While the old gang of pro-Soviet Polish Communists, nicknamed the Natolin group after their meeting place, were determined to stop the riots at Poznan by the harshest measures of repression, others, working with Gomulka, and including the Party's First Secretary, Ochab, as well as Jozef Cyrankiewicz, the Prime Minister, realized that the Party was caught between the irresistible force of popular

revolution and the immovable object of Soviet power. They pushed against the immovable object. They had no choice, unless they were to be crushed in an uprising of popular wrath — and, lo — it moved.

They had the advantage over the Russians, because they knew what was going on. The first open division was revealed in that strange duologue between Khrushchev in the Soviet Union and Ochab in Poland. The riots, said Khrushchev, were due to Western subversion and provocation — and he was echoed by the pro-Soviet Poles. Not at all, said Ochab, taking nearly everyone by surprise: the riots were due to shocking living conditions and bureaucratic callousness and inefficiency. He, the man who until very recently had been boasting of rising living standards, now said he sympathized with the workers of Poznan and elsewhere, and he would do his best to help.

Ochab, as I have said, knew what was going on. He knew that he was faced with a popular revolt, led and made articulate by intellectuals, against a totalitarian state — and that this revolt must succeed, unless put down by the military in the Hitler manner. He knew that the Polish army could not be relied on for this purpose. This meant that the only force available was the Soviet army.

He also knew that if the Soviet army intervened there would be civil war. He had in Gomulka a man who had comparatively clean hands, who was a profound patriot, who had suffered from the Russians. It was simply a question of coming to terms with him. Gomulka's terms were high. They included the sacking of the pro-Soviet elements of the Party leadership, far-reaching reforms, and the abolition of the UB; some return to private enterprise, a great deal of freedom of expression, and the installation of Gomulka himself as First Secretary in Ochab's place — from which eminence he would negotiate as an equal with the Russians, offering a loyal alliance in exchange for Polish sovereignty and demanding the withdrawal of Marshal Rokossowski and a host of Soviet generals from their positions of political and military supremacy. Gomulka carried the day. The 8th Party plenum of the Polish Workers' Party, which was to welcome him back to the fold, purge the Party, commit Poland to a new course, and expose and denounce the evils of the past, was convened — and it was the sudden realization in Moscow that things had gone much farther than anyone thought which brought the Kremlin leaders hurrying to Warsaw and set the Soviet troops in action.

To no avail. The Russians had made the very great mistake, shared by many Western observers,

of confusing the Polish revolt with Titoism. Tito, the dictatorial leader of Yugoslavia who had achieved his own revolution by his own efforts, revolted against Moscow interference, quarreled with Stalin, and took his country with him into the wilderness. The Russians thought that this was what was going on in Poland. They thought, in a word, that they were dealing with an internal Party revolt. They thought that all they had to do was to intimidate Gomulka and his supporters (how vulnerable, compared with Yugoslavia, was Poland — a flat land entirely surrounded by Russian troops, and with obedient Russian stooges in Czechoslovakia and East Germany!) by an overwhelming display of displeasure backed by an open show of force and they would nip the revolt in the bud. They realized, just in time, that they were not dealing with Titoism, but with something far more elemental and outside their experience: with a true revolution from below, which was driving the Polish Communists into the unknown, which could only be quelled, and at what a cost, by full-scale military intervention.

And so they gave in. Gomulka had won his victory. It was the most stirring victory for many dusty years. But to win a victory is not to win a war. And now, as I write, the final issue is still hanging in the balance. Gomulka, exhibiting extreme skill and tact, has inherited an economy in ruins and a people temporarily united but in an ugly mood. The events of Budapest nearly sent the Polish people up in flames. A standing nightmare for the new government is that angry workers and hotheaded students may provoke the Soviet army into savage reprisals, undoing at a blow all that has been done.

The balance between the Stalinists and the anti-Stalinists in the Kremlin swings to and fro, revealing nothing but uncertainty, dissension, and bewilderment in face of forces the Russian leaders simply cannot comprehend. They are now faced with the lesson of Budapest. Their restraint toward Gomulka has lost them Poland; their panic savagery toward the Hungarians is losing them Hungary. What conclusions will they draw from this painful and complicated lesson? We cannot tell. But whatever happens, the stand of the Poles and the Hungarians will not have been in vain. The international front of Communism, hollow behind the façade, has been broken.

Either the satellites will end up with a new freedom, or the Soviet army will have to intervene in strength, submitting the satellites to naked imperialism, costly in the extreme and devoid of the least pretense of moral authority.

Hounded

A Czech who settled in the United States in 1938, JOSEPH WECHSBERG became naturalized, served as a technical sergeant in the U.S. Army during World War II, and was on duty in Germany when his first book, Looking for a Bluebird, appeared. Most of his writing has been done on and about the Continent; he keeps in close touch with Central Europe — he is revisiting Czechoslovakia as this article goes to press — and in close touch with those Europeans who come to us for sanctuary.

ALIENS IN A FREE WORLD

by JOSEPH WECHSBERG

1

IN APRIL of last year, five refugee Soviet sailors who had been granted political asylum in the United States a few months earlier flew back to the Soviet Union by way of Finland. They took off from Idlewild Airport, to which they had been “escorted” by twenty tough-looking Soviet agents while U.S. officials and welfare workers looked on in dismay, unable to help. The sailors had repeatedly told their friends in America that they were happy here and wanted to stay; one of them was about to get married in New York.

“There is no law authorizing the U.S. government to interfere with the exit of aliens from this country,” an Immigration Service spokesman explained as the plane took off. Americans were shocked to realize that their laws and government cannot guarantee sanctuary to political exiles.

A Senate Internal Security subcommittee subsequently accused the Soviet delegation at the United Nations of “espionage and kidnaping.” The State Department declared two members of the Soviet UN delegation *persona non grata* and filed a protest against the chief Soviet delegate, Ambassador Arkady A. Sobolev, supposedly the mastermind behind the well-organized kidnaping scheme. A few days later the State Department demanded that Polish diplomats in the U.S. cease the “objectionable practice” of exerting pressure upon Polish refugees to return home.

According to a recent report of the International Rescue Committee’s (IRC) Emergency Commission, headed by General William J. Donovan, wartime OSS chief, Soviet agents made over sixty contacts with refugees during a single month in New York alone. The Committee has documentary evidence of hundreds of cases of refugees — both in America and in Europe — who were hounded for months, blackmailed, terrorized, or simply persuaded to go back — *and went back*.

“Redefection,” the return of a refugee to his Communist homeland, has been a grave problem in Europe since mid-1954. Now it has become a dramatic issue even in America, Land of Liberty.

Naturalized U.S. citizens as well as aliens have been approached by agents — and have gone back.

“To the escapee, America is synonymous with security,” says General Donovan. “A visit or a phone call from a Communist agent strikes with extraordinary shock. . . . Each return is not only of propaganda value to the Communists, but has an unsettling effect among the refugees.”

The fact that even refugees living in America under assumed names at undisclosed addresses were tracked down by Communist agents has had a shattering effect on large refugee communities. Obviously, there exists a well-organized network of Communist informers in the U.S. who observe all refugees and report their findings to a Communist intelligence center. The refugee, his sense of security badly shaken, doesn’t know where to turn for protection. The local police are unable to handle the delicate problem; officials are baffled; the FBI often has no jurisdiction to interfere.

One night not long ago, a former Hungarian lawyer who had lived in the U.S. since 1946 and had been working in a New Jersey soap factory was awakened by fists banging against his door. Four men stood outside and wanted to talk to him. The man refused to open and the visitors went away. The next day, the Hungarian went into hiding. During the following weeks, he changed his address four times — but to no avail. As soon as he had moved, he would be called on the phone by a mysterious stranger though even his closest friends didn’t know his new address. Twice he was visited by representatives of the Hungarian Consulate in New York City. One day he was gone, leaving a short note: “I am going back to Hungary. I can’t take it any longer.”

Every time a refugee goes back to his homeland, the people behind the Iron Curtain are told that the Western world is on the brink of collapse — and they lose hope for their eventual liberation. In short, the redefection campaign is an important segment of the Communist strategy to weaken and divide the Western world. It has already broken

several refugee resistance movements and discredited important refugee leaders.

Why would anyone leave the United States for a dreary, regimented life in, say, Communist Poland or Czechoslovakia today? The answer is: because of fear, nostalgia in moments of depression, economic insecurity in the West, and threats that one's loved ones back home may become subject to reprisals.

2

THE methods of the campaign vary from emotional appeals to stark terror. On September 17, 1955, the Soviet Union proclaimed an amnesty for returning refugees. Refugees in Western Europe and in the Americas began to receive well-written, beautifully printed newspapers, magazines, and pamphlets which appealed to their patriotism and told them of "changed" conditions in their homeland. Personal letters from family and friends arrived, describing life back home in glowing terms (and, incidentally, hinting that relatives might get into serious trouble if the refugee did not come home). For some exiles, these letters were the first they had received from home in many years. Letters from refugee compatriots who had already gone back proved to be especially damaging. Even stronger were personalized radio appeals. When a man in a West German refugee camp hears the voice of his mother over Radio Prague (or East Berlin, Warsaw, Sofia), imploring him to come back, the effect is shattering.

The refugee's failure to make a decent living in the West is cleverly exploited, and sentimental appeals are made to his nostalgic feelings. The pull of the fatherland is always strong. Soviet and satellite legation and consular officials visit refugee families and tell them about the "new good life" at home — much better, they say, than the refugee's present living conditions in the West. The Hungarian Embassy's "Maison Hongroise" in Paris holds open house every Saturday afternoon, treating 200 Hungarian refugees to Hungarian cakes and wines, *barack* (apricot) brandy, movies, and propaganda speeches.

Polish agents spend about \$8500 a day to "influence" the Polish refugee community in France, according to a recent estimate by French authorities. The Poles have started a long-range campaign to lure back some of the 750,000 Poles living in France, half of them already French citizens. Emphasis is placed on Polish nationalism and culture. Exiled Polish writers receive tempting offers to publish their new books in Poland. Children are invited to spend the summer in camps there, *émigré* students are promised scholarships at Polish universities. Direct pressure is put on Polish anti-Communist refugee leaders.

The Czechs operate with anonymous, handwritten chain letters, magazines, radio appeals. A well-

made publication, *Hlas Domova*, "The Voice of Home," evokes feelings of nostalgia. There has been a large number of Czech redefectors; each of them helps to destroy the image of the "Western paradise." If it were really a paradise, the Czech propagandists argue, why would the refugees come back?

Among the most recent targets of the campaign are Lithuanian and Latvian refugees who were angered by the pious appeals to return to the "fatherland."

"What fatherland?" asked a Baltic refugee, familiar with history. "Siberia?"

Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and the Soviet Union have issued amnesty decrees for returnees. Poland has issued no amnesty because "returnees are never subjected to prosecution anyway."

Despite promises of amnesty, most prospective returnees know that they will be marched through the streets of their native towns wearing rags and carrying posters saying "We Chose Freedom in the West." They will make Communist-written speeches before factory workers, state farmers, school children, over the radio. Yet, although they will have no guarantee of political amnesty, no guarantee of personal freedom, some of them will be persuaded to return.

As a last resort, there are always blackmail, abduction, and murder. The IRC lists fourteen well-camouflaged cases of kidnaping and "from ten to twenty murders" in the Munich and Berlin areas. Bombs have been mailed to refugee leaders in Munich.

A few months ago, Victor Zaleski, an anti-Communist Polish refugee in Bavaria, was roused out of sleep by several men. Red agents had decoded the carefully kept secret of his changed name and new life. Zaleski managed to get away and asked the German authorities for help. They guarded him at an undisclosed place. A week later, Zaleski disappeared. Recently, Polish refugees in Western Europe have received carefully reproduced letters in Zaleski's handwriting, denouncing the West and urging them to come home to Poland. The handwriting is genuine but the language of the letters indicates that they might have been written under duress.

A Czech refugee who had been in one of Germany's refugee camps, before going back home, promised his fellow inmates to write to them how things were in Czechoslovakia. It was agreed that if his letter was truthful he would sign it "sincerely." If, however, he was forced to write lies, he would sign the letter "very sincerely." When the letter arrived weeks later, describing the wonderful life in Czechoslovakia, it was signed, "Yours very, very sincerely." And a Lithuanian who recently returned from Buenos Aires to his Baltic homeland wrote to his friends in Argentina, "It's marvelous

here. You should all come back. Don't forget to buy a good trunk at Lazaro Costa's store." The "trunks" which Costa sells are — coffins.

3

THERE are thousands of people all over Europe who wonder whether they should go back. All of them hate and fear Communism, but their miserable living conditions and their utterly hopeless future make them very vulnerable to Communist pressure.

More than 200,000 refugees in Austria, Germany, France, Italy, the Near East, Greece, and other places have neither homes nor jobs. They are the "hard core" of the refugees — the hopeless cases. Over 75,000 live in crowded squalor in 200 "official" refugee camps (most are in Germany) under the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Most camps consist of huts of wood or corrugated iron; others have stone barracks with damp rooms and cold concrete floors. Windows are made of cardboard, doors of old blankets. There is the stench of poverty and sickness in the air. Often young married couples are forced to live in one room with old people and small children. Some families have been in these camps *ten years!*

In addition, tens of thousands lead a dreary life in "unofficial" camps and settlements, or in the attics and cellars of war-damaged houses. Many of them are so sick and old that they belong in a hospital or old people's home.

"We were fools to seek refuge in a free country," one refugee said to me. "We live like pigs. Is it any wonder that we'll all become Communists?"

The future holds little hope for these people. The immigration laws of most countries are strict, often merciless. Some bar widows with small children. Others refuse anyone over forty-five. Most countries exclude applicants whose X-ray pictures show the slightest symptoms of tuberculosis. (In the U.S., which on immigration matters often sets the tone of action by other nations, special legislation should at long last change the wording in the Immigration Law dealing with t.b. "in any form" to "contagious" t.b., which would bring the legal definition abreast of present medical advance. And t.b. cures should be given to persons otherwise eligible for immigration.)

Consular officials sometimes literally feel an applicant's muscles. White-collar people and university graduates are often told to learn bricklaying, plumbing, house carpentry — and to "try again in a year." The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, on May 14, admitted that there was "no hope for resettling 80 per cent of the refugees living in camps." Both Radio Free Europe and the Voice of America have stopped encouraging people to escape from Iron Curtain countries.

It is astonishing that so many of the refugees

stay in the free world, no matter how bad their life is. At Camp Valka, West Germany's reception camp for foreign refugees, I saw a written sign over the door to a barrack: "We Chose Freedom. Step In and See What We Got."

They got paper-thin walls, primitive outdoor latrines, no running water. They got 1500 calories of food per day, a lunch consisting of a rancid, watery gruel with a few noodles and a piece of bread. (The camp administration does its best to stretch the daily food allowance of 30 cents per person.)

The bona fide refugee at Valka often has trouble proving his identity and good intentions. He is questioned by German and American security agencies, sometimes for months, and his answers must check with cross-references in voluminous files. He must explain his whereabouts in the past years and produce significant detail. (When you crawl through the barbed-wire fences of the Iron Curtain, you don't carry many papers.) On top of this, he must be processed by the Bonn government's Federal Screening Commission, which takes many more months. In the meantime, he is not allowed to seek or accept work.

Every Iron Curtain refugee must produce proof, in accordance with the Geneva Convention of July 28, 1951, that he came to the West "out of well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion and nationality," or that he was in "immediate danger" because of his political convictions or actions. Decision is made by the Screening Commission. If a man is cleared, he gets political asylum and a "traveling paper" recognized by all countries that ratified the Geneva Convention.

Such a refugee has the rights and duties of a German citizen, except the right to vote and the duty to serve in the army. He is allocated to one of the *Laender* (political subdivisions) of Western Germany, where he may settle and work. If he does not find employment, he is eligible for relief payment. An unemployed refugee in the Munich area receives 43 cents a day and tiny payments for his family. If he meets immigration-law requirements, he may eventually go abroad.

It's a different story, though, for the refugee who is rejected by the Screening Commission because he was not "persecuted" by a Communist regime. Such a man is forbidden to move around, work, or marry. He may not hit the road and look for a job as migrants in the U.S. have always done. He is stuck. He gets no internationally recognized personal document, no relief money. If he crosses Germany's western border, he is arrested, goes to prison, and is ultimately sent back to Germany. There he serves a second prison sentence. Some people have been in various prisons for years for illegal border-crossing. The rejected refugee is told to stay in a camp, where he gets a little food, shelter, and \$3.27 pocket money per month.

"The Western governments have no interest in these people and feel no responsibility for them," a high-ranking United Nations official said to me. "And the Germans do everything within the law to get rid of their burden. The West German government makes no effort to dissuade anyone from going home. A notice on the bulletin board in every refugee compound explains the routine to be followed by anyone desiring repatriation."

The West German law on political asylum has been called a model of legal protection. In Berlin especially the treatment of refugees from Soviet Germany has been sympathetic and effective. But the fact remains that Western Germany has a difficult refugee problem of its own. In addition to 220,000 homeless foreigners in the Federal Republic who have no hope of finding work or emigrating, there are hundreds of thousands of non-ethnic German refugees residing in Western Germany. Only 12,000 of them fall within the framework of the escapee program. All others need financial assistance, month after month, and the money must be raised by German taxpayers. Hundreds of German refugees arrive every month from Eastern Germany and must be taken care of. Last year, the Federal Republic spent over 10 million dollars on care and relief of refugees. Naturally, the Germans are not overjoyed at having to accept foreign escapees as well. "Why should *we* be stuck with them just because we happen to have an Iron Curtain border?" a Bonn official said to me, with characteristic candor. His sentiment was echoed by officials in Austria, France, Italy, Greece, and other countries with sizable refugee populations.

4

SINCE the dissolution of the International Refugee Organization in 1952, no international agency has looked after the rejected, stateless human wrecks. The United States Escapee Program normally cares only for those who are already being processed and expect to emigrate in the near future, provided they escaped *after* January 1, 1948. (Vast numbers of refugees escaped between 1945 and 1948, however.) Voluntary agencies often work mainly for "accepted" refugees and pass up the "rejected," who need help most of all.

Neutral observers and UN officials blame the great powers. They point out, for instance, that Austria (population 7 million) last year spent over 5 million dollars on refugees, twice as much as the United States (population 165 million). They point out that since the end of IRO in 1952, when the U.S. Escapee Program started work, only 21,000 persons have been settled abroad — 10,000 in the United States, the rest in Australia, Canada, South America.

Hope rose when President Eisenhower signed the Refugee Relief Act on August 7, 1953, saying,

"We are giving a new chance in life to 214,000 fellow humans." But the final version of the Act turned out to be a hard-to-administer instrument, full of delaying provisions. It demands, for instance, that "complete information" must be established about the exile's past two years. Sometimes this can be done only by letting the exile wait for years in demoralizing places like Camp Valka. Each prospective immigrant must have a sponsor's assurance of a home and a job in the United States, approved by the government's housing and employment agencies. This means a lot of red tape and discourages many potential sponsors. The largest number of visas is reserved for escapees in Western Germany and Austria, and those unused must not be transferred to escapees in other free countries. State Department officials have notified Congress that urgent action on the escapee provision is needed; otherwise the whole program will be severely hurt. There has been no action. In countries other than the United States the situation is almost as bad.

The refugee problem is international and should be solved by international cooperation. But the UN approach has been slow, vague, and bureaucratic. On October 21, 1954, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Dr. G. J. van Heuven Goedhart of the Netherlands, drew up a four-year program "for permanent solutions" which was approved by the UN General Assembly. A new United Nations Refugee Fund of 16 million dollars was to be made up by contributions of the various governments, "to promote integration and resettlement." But contributions have come in at a snail's pace; besides, the UN cannot start positive action; it merely hopes to initiate a series of "chain reactions" among governments, voluntary agencies, and private citizens that will promote the permanent establishment of 177,000 refugees within the next four years. It looks like another case of "too little and too late."

One of the few effective countermeasures was the "crash program" of the U.S. Escapee Program. USEP staff members visit Soviet refugees in Germany to discuss their situation and to give them personal advice. They are authorized to spend small funds for the refugees' immediate personal needs. The program has had a calming effect on the disturbed Soviet refugee community in Western Germany.

Another encouraging step was the airlift set up in November to take Hungarian refugees to the Western democracies.

There are other steps that we should take immediately (some are based on recommendations submitted by the Donovan Committee) to stop the world-wide Communist redefection campaign: —

1. A major effort should be made to arouse the free world to the real dangers of the campaign.

2. In the United States, various government

departments (Health, Welfare and Education, Interior, Justice, State) should offer the refugee assistance and advice, even before he gets into trouble with Communist agents.

3. In Europe, processing and screening methods should be speeded up. The United States, as leader of the free Western world, should show the way by effective administration of its own Refugee Relief Act.

4. Everywhere, a program is needed to strengthen the morale of the refugees and to provide follow-up counseling for at least one year after they are settled. In the U.S., various cultural centers for refugees should be established. In Europe, all refugees — those rejected as well as those waiting for visas — should be permitted to work.

5. The executive branch of the U.S. government, under the direct encouragement of President Eisenhower, should give a deeper meaning to America's traditional sanctuary for political refugees and give stronger assurance to all escapees.

We must remember that there are still tens of thousands like Antonin, a young mechanic from Prague, who had a good job there but ran away from Communism "because I couldn't take it." He was rejected as a political refugee and thus is excluded from emigration. He isn't allowed to work, to move around, or to marry.

"Still, someday, somehow, I know I'll be able to go abroad and start a new life," he says.

There must be hope for people like Antonin. We can't afford to let them down.



ONE KIND OF COLLOQUY

by ROBERT HILLYER

HERE in the garden, strolling slowly
With a young poet who is wholly
Rapt in his own imagination,
I leave to him the conversation,
Knowing that through his golden mist
I'd loom, a sad materialist.

How creature comforts come to be
A substitute for ecstasy!
Wordsworth, romantic though he was,
Confessed how revelations pass;
And Henry Vaughan, light's own true son,
Observed the same phenomenon.
Blake moved in radiance to the end
As Catherine saw his soul ascend
Clapping its hands; and Shakespeare, after
Storming the globe's extremest rafter,
Vanished in more tempestuous magic
Beyond the comic or the tragic.
But, on the whole, the poets mostly,
Becoming less remote and ghostly,
Repeat with stresses more intense
Our general experience,
When dithyrambic dreams attract
Less than the fantasies of fact.

But why should I anticipate
This younger poet's future state?
He speaks of love that moves the stars,
Of revolution ending wars,

Abstractions realer than the real,
And, clear as crystal, the Ideal.
His nostrils quiver in response
To ethers that I savored once;
His thoughts like angels climb the rungs
Of ladders toward the gift of tongues.
How accurately he can spell
The name of the Ineffable!
Not yet acknowledging the birth
Of beauty from component earth,
He floats through flowers that yesterday
Were treated with manure and spray,
And sees them vaguely as pale gems
Suspended without roots or stems.
All air and fire, his darting sense
Spurns the two coarser elements —
Water, from which we first were born,
And earth, to which we all return.
Nostalgic for such vision, ah
How can I say, "*J'ai vu tout ça*"?

Better for him to keep the rapture
That I have known but can't recapture;
Better for me my narrower joy
That views of distance would destroy.
Our difference breeds harmoniousness;
His talk attunes my silences.
On this bright lawn, this flowering slope,
Keats could have bared his soul to Pope,
And wit relived the age of hope.



Last spring two distinguished Englishmen were nominated to fill the chair of Professor of Poetry at Oxford University, W. H. AUDEN and Harold Nicolson. There was heated argument among the dons and undergraduates; signs reading "Auden for Prof" were chalked on the walls; and when at last the votes were counted, it was indeed the poet who had been elected. On his inauguration Mr. Auden, after paying his respects to the office and to the line of distinguished scholars and poets who had preceded him, began to speak of the Censor, that inner voice and self-critic who occupies and determines each individual poet in his time.

MAKING AND JUDGING POETRY

by W. H. AUDEN

1

I BEGAN writing poetry because one Sunday afternoon in March 1922, a friend suggested that I should: the thought had never occurred to me. I scarcely knew any poems — *The English Hymnal*, the *Psalms*, *Struwwelpeter*, and the mnemonic rhymes in *Kennedy's Shorter Latin Primer* are about all I remember — and I took little interest in what is called Imaginative Literature. Most of my reading had been related to a private world of Sacred Objects. Aside from a few stories like George Macdonald's *The Princess and the Goblin* and Jules Verne's *The Child of the Cavern*, the subjects of which touched upon my obsessions, my favorite books bore such titles as *Underground Life*, *Machinery for Metalliferous Mines*, *Lead and Zinc Ores of Northumberland and Alston Moor*, and my conscious purpose in reading them had been to gain information about my sacred objects. At the time, therefore, the suggestion that I write poetry seemed like a revelation from heaven for which nothing in my past could account.

Looking back, however, I now realize that I had read the technological prose of my favorite books in a peculiar way. A word like *pyrites*, for example, was for me not simply an indicative sign; it was the Proper Name of a Sacred Being, so that, when I heard an aunt pronounce it *pirrits*, I was shocked. Her pronunciation was more than wrong, it was ugly. Ignorance was impiety. If my friend's suggestion met with such an unexpected response, the reason may have been that, without knowing it, I had been enjoying the poetic use of language for a long time.

A beginner's efforts cannot be called bad or imitative. They are imaginary. A bad poem has this or that fault which can be pointed out, an imitative poem is a recognizable imitation of this or that poem, this or that poet. But about an imaginary

poem no criticism can be made since it is an imitation of poetry-in-general. Never again will a poet feel so inspired, so certain of genius, as he feels in these first days as his pencil flies across the page. Yet something is being learned even now. As he scribbles on he is beginning to get the habit of noticing metrical quantities, to see that any two-syllable word in isolation must be either a *ti-tum*, a *tum-ti* or, occasionally, a *tum-tum*, but that when associated with other words it can sometimes become a *ti-ti*; when he discovers a rhyme he has not thought of before, he stores it away in his memory, a habit which an Italian poet may not need to acquire but which an English poet will find useful.

And, though as yet he can only scribble, he has started reading real poems for pleasure and on purpose. Many things can be said against anthologies, but for an adolescent to whom even the names of most of the poets are unknown, a good one can be an invaluable instructor. I had the extraordinary good fortune to be presented one Christmas with the de la Mare anthology *Come Hither*. This had, for my purposes, two great virtues. Firstly, its good taste. Reading it today, I find very few poems which I should have omitted and none which I should think it bad taste to admire. Secondly, its catholic taste. Given the youthful audience for which it was designed, there were certain kinds of poetry which it did not represent, but within those limits the variety was extraordinary. Particularly valuable was its lack of literary class-consciousness, its juxtaposition on terms of equality of unofficial poetry, such as counting-out rhymes, and official poetry, such as the odes of Keats. It taught me at the start that poetry does not have to be great or even serious to be good, and that one does not have to be ashamed of moods in which one feels no desire whatsoever to read *The Divine Comedy*.

A poet who wishes to improve himself should certainly keep good company, but for his profit as well as for his comfort the company should not be too far above his station. It is by no means clear that the poetry which influenced Shakespeare's development most fruitfully was the greatest poetry with which he was acquainted. Even for readers, when one thinks of the attention that a great poem demands, there is something frivolous about the notion of spending every day with one. Masterpieces should be kept for High Holidays of the Spirit.

I am not trying to defend the aesthetic heresy that one subject is no more important than any other, or that a poem has no subject or that there is no difference between a great poem and a good one — a heresy which seems to me contrary to human feeling and common sense — but I can understand why it exists. Nothing is worse than a bad poem which was intended to be great. So a would-be poet begins to learn that poetry is more various than he imagined and that he can like and dislike different poems for different reasons.

2

IF POETRY were in great public demand so that there were overworked professional poets, I can imagine a system under which an established poet would take on a small number of apprentices who would begin by changing his blotting paper, advance to typing his manuscripts, and end up by ghost-writing poems for him which he was too busy to start or finish. The apprentices might really learn something for, knowing that he would get the blame as well as the credit for their work, the Master would be extremely choosy about his apprentices and do his best to teach them all he knew.

In fact, of course, a would-be poet serves his apprenticeship in a library. This has its advantages. Though the Master is deaf and dumb and gives neither instruction nor criticism, the apprentice can choose any Master he likes, living or dead, the Master is available at any hour of the day or night, lessons are all for free, and his passionate admiration of his Master will ensure that he work hard to please him.

To please means to imitate and it is impossible to do a recognizable imitation of a poet without attending to every detail of his diction, rhythms, and habits of sensibility. In imitating his Master, the apprentice acquires a Censor. Anyone who writes poetry will be familiar with this critic who is only interested in one author and only concerned with works that do not yet exist. From his Censor, the poet learns that, no matter how he finds it, by inspiration, by potluck, or after hours of laborious search, there is only one word or rhythm or form that is the *right* one. The right one is still not yet the *real* one, for the apprentice is ventriloquizing

but he has got away from poetry-in-general; he is learning how *a* poem is written. Later in life, incidentally, he will realize how important is the art of imitation, for he will not infrequently be called upon to imitate himself.

My first Master was Thomas Hardy, and I think I was very lucky in my choice. He was a good poet, perhaps a great one, but not *too* good. Much as I loved him, even I could see that his diction was often clumsy and forced and that a lot of his poems were plain bad. This gave me hope where a flawless poet might have made me despair. He was modern without being too modern. His world and sensibility were close enough to mine — curiously enough his face bore a striking resemblance to my father's — so that, in imitating him, I was being led towards not away from myself, but they were not so close as to obliterate my identity. If I looked through his spectacles, at least I was conscious of a certain eyestrain. Lastly, his metrical variety, his fondness for complicated stanza forms, were an invaluable training in the craft of making. I am also thankful that my first Master did not write in free verse or I might then have been tempted to believe that free verse is easier to write than stricter forms, whereas I know it is infinitely more difficult.

Presently the curtain rises on a scene rather like the finale to Act II of *Die Meistersinger*. Let us call it The Gathering of the Apprentices. The apprentices gather together from all over and discover that they are a new generation; somebody shouts the word "modern" and the riot is on. The New Iconoclastic Poets and Critics are discovered — when I was an undergraduate a critic could still describe Mr. T. S. Eliot, O.M., as "a drunken helot" — the poetry which these new authorities recommend becomes the Canon, that on which they frown is thrown out of the window. There are gods whom it is blasphemy to criticize and devils whose names may not be mentioned without execrations. The apprentices have seen a great light while their tutors sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

An apprentice discovers that there is a significant relation between the statement "Today I am nineteen" and the statement "Today is February the twenty-first, 1926." If the discovery goes to his head, it is, nevertheless, a discovery he must make for, until he realizes that all the poems he has read, however different they may be, have the one common characteristic that they have all been written, his own writing will never cease to be imitative. He will never know what he himself *can write* until he has a general sense of what *needs to be written*. And this is the one thing his elders cannot teach him, just because they are his elders; he can only learn it from his fellow apprentices with whom he shares one thing in common, they are contemporaries.

The discovery is not wholly pleasant. If the young speak of the past as a burden which it is a

joy to throw off, behind their words may often lie a resentment and fright at realizing that the past will not carry them on its back.

The critical statements of the Censor are always polemical advice to his poet, meant not as objective truths but as pointers, and in youth which is trying to discover its own identity, the exasperation at not having yet succeeded naturally tends to express itself in violence and exaggeration.

If an undergraduate announces to his tutor one morning that Gertrude Stein is the greatest writer who ever lived or that Shakespeare is no good, he is really only saying something like this: "I don't know what to write yet or how, but yesterday while reading Gertrude Stein, I thought I saw a clue," or "Reading Shakespeare yesterday, I realized that one of the faults in what I write is a tendency to rhetorical bombast."

Fashion and snobbery are also valuable as a defense against literary indigestion. Regardless of their quality, it is always better to read a few books carefully than skim through many, and, short of a personal taste which cannot be formed overnight, snobbery is as good a principle of limitation as any other.

I am eternally grateful, for example, to the musical fashion of my youth which prevented me from listening to Italian Opera until I was over thirty, by which age I was capable of really appreciating a world so beautiful and so challenging to my own cultural heritage.

The apprentices do each other a further mutual service which no older and sounder critic could do. They read each other's manuscripts. At this age a fellow apprentice has two great virtues as a critic. When he reads your poem, he may grossly overestimate it, but if he does, he really believes what he is saying; he never flatters or praises merely to encourage. Secondly, he reads your poem with that passionate attention which grown-up critics only give to masterpieces and grown-up poets only to themselves. When he finds fault, his criticisms are intended to help you to improve.

It is just this kind of personal criticism which, in later life when the band of apprentices have dispersed, a writer often finds it so hard to get. The verdicts of reviewers, however just, are seldom of any use to him. Why should they be? A critic is dealing with a published work, not a manuscript. His job is to tell the public what that work is, not tell its author what he should and could have written instead. Yet this is the only kind of criticism from which an author can benefit. Those who could do it for him are generally, like himself, too elsewhere, too busy, too married, too selfish.

We must assume that our apprentice does succeed in becoming a poet, that, sooner or later, a day arrives when his Censor is able to say truthfully and for the first time: "All the words are right, and all are yours."

His thrill at hearing this does not last long, however, for a moment later comes the thought: "Will it ever happen again?" Whatever his future life as a wage-earner, a citizen, a family man may be, to the end of his days his life as a poet will be without anticipation. He will never be able to say: "Tomorrow I will write a poem and, thanks to my training and experience, I already know I shall do a good job." In the eyes of others a man is a poet if he has written one good poem. In his own he is only a poet at the moment when he is making his last revision to a new poem. The moment before, he was still only a potential poet: the moment after, he is a man who has ceased to write poetry, perhaps for ever.

3

It is hardly surprising, then, if a young poet seldom does well in his examinations. If he does, then either he is also a scholar in the making, or he is a very good boy indeed. A medical student knows that he must study anatomy in order to become a doctor, so he has a reason for study. A future scholar has a reason, because he knows more or less what he wants to know. But there is nothing a would-be poet knows he has to know. He is at the mercy of the immediate moment because he has no concrete reason for not yielding to its demands and, for all he knows now, surrendering to his immediate desire may turn out later to have been the best thing he could have done. His immediate desire can even be to attend a lecture. I remember one I attended, delivered by Professor Tolkien. I do not remember a single word he said but at a certain point he recited, and magnificently, a long passage of *Beowulf*. I was spellbound. This poetry, I knew, was going to be my dish. I became willing, therefore, to work at Anglo-Saxon because, unless I did, I should never be able to read this poetry. I learned enough to read it, however sloppily, and Anglo-Saxon and Middle English poetry have been one of my strongest, most lasting influences.

But this was something which neither I nor anybody else could have foreseen. Again, what good angel lured me into Blackwell's one afternoon and, from such a wilderness of volumes, picked out for me the essays of William Paton Ker? No other critic whom I have subsequently read could have granted me the same vision of a kind of literary All Souls Night in which the dead, the living, and the unborn writers of every age and in every tongue were seen as engaged upon a common noble and civilizing task. No other could have so instantaneously aroused in me a fascination with prosody, which I have never lost.

You must not imagine, however, that being a bad boy is all fun. During my three years as an undergraduate, I had a high old time, I made some lifelong friends, and I was more unhappy than I have ever been before or since. I might or might not be

wasting my time — only the future would show — I was certainly wasting my parents' money. Nor must you think that, because he fails to study, a young poet looks down his nose at all the scholarly investigations going on around him. Unless he is very young indeed, he knows that if it had not been for scholars working themselves blind copying and collating manuscripts, many poems would be unavailable, including those of Catullus, and many others full of lines that made no sense. Nor has the invention of printing made editors unnecessary. Lucky the poet whose collected works are not full of misprints.

Even a young poet knows or very soon will realize that, but for scholars, he would be at the mercy of the literary taste of a past generation, since, once a book has gone out of print and been forgotten, only the scholar with his unselfish courage to read the unreadable will retrieve the rare prize. How much Donne, even, would he have read, had it not been for Professor Grierson? What would he know of Clare or Barnes or Christopher Smart but for Messrs. Blunden, Grigson, Force-Stead, and Bond? Nor is editing all that scholars have already done for him. There is that blessed combination of poet and scholar, the translator. How, for example, without the learning and talent of Sir Arthur Waley, could he have discovered, and without the slightest effort on his part, an entirely new world of poetry, that of the Chinese? And then, however different they may be in other ways, poets and scholars have one thing in common. They are not gentlemen. The U is that which both, being non-U, with passion worship.

No, what prevents the young poet from academic study is not conceited ingratitude but a law of mental growth. Except in matters of life and death, temporal or spiritual, questions must not be answered until they have been asked, and at present he has no questions. At present he makes little distinction between a book, a country walk, and a kiss. All are equally experiences to store away in his memory. Could he look into a memory, the literary historian would find many members of that species which he calls books, but they are curiously changed from the books he finds in his library. The dates are all different. *In Memoriam* is written before *The Dunciad*, the thirteenth century comes after the sixteenth. He always thought Robert Burton wrote a big book about melancholy. Apparently he only wrote ten pages. He is accustomed to the notion that a book can only be written once. Here some are continually rewritten. In his library, books are related to each other in an orderly way by genre or subject. Here the commonest principle of association seems to be by age groups. *Piers Ploughman III* is going about with Kierkegaard's *Journals*, *Piers Ploughman IV* with *The Making of the English Landscape*. Most puzzling of all, instead of only associating with members of

their own kind, in this extraordinary democracy every species of being knows every other and the closest friend of a book is rarely another book. *Gulliver's Travels* walks arm in arm with a love affair, a canto of *Il Paradiso* sits with a singularly good dinner, *War and Peace* never leaves the side of a penniless Christmas in a foreign city, the tenth *Winter's Tale* exchanges greetings with the first complete *La Favorita*.

Yet this is the world out of which poems are made. Yeats describes it as a "rag and bone shop." Let me use the less drab but no less anarchic image of a Mad Hatter's Tea-Party.

4

IN so reading to stock his memory with images upon which later he may be able to draw in his own work, there is no critical principle by which a poet can select his books. The critical judgment "This book is good or bad" implies good or bad at all times, but in relation to a reader's future a book is good now if its future effect is good, and, since the future is unknown, no judgment can be made. The safest guide, therefore, is the naïve uncritical principle of personal liking. A person at least knows one thing about his future, that however different it may be from his present, it will be his. However he may have changed, he will still be himself not somebody else. What he likes now, therefore, whether an impersonal judgment approve or disapprove, has the best chance of becoming useful to him later.

A poet is all the more willing to be guided by personal liking because he assumes, I think with reason, that, since he wants to write poetry himself, his taste may be limited but it will not be so bad as to lead him astray. The chances are that most of the books he likes are such as a critic would approve of. Should it come to a quarrel between liking and approving, however, I think he will always take the side of liking.

In judging a work of the past, the question of the historical critic: "What was the author of this work trying to do? How far did he succeed in doing it?", important as he knows it to be, will always interest a poet less than the question: "What does this work suggest to living writers now? Will it help or hinder them in what they are trying to do?"

A few years ago I came across the following lines: —

Wherewith love to the hartes forest he fleeth,
Leaving his enterprise with paine and crye,
And there him hideth and not appeareth.
What may I do? when my master feareth,
But in the field with him to live and die,
For good is the life, ending faithfully.

I found the rhythm of these lines strangely beautiful, they haunted me and I know that they have

had an influence upon the rhythm of certain lines of my own.

Of course I know that all the historical evidence suggests that Wyatt was trying to write regular iambs, that the rhythm he was after would have his lines run thus:—

And there him hideth and not appeareth.
 What may I do? when my master feareth,
 But in the field with him to live and die,
 For good is the life, ending faithfully.

Since they cannot be read this way without sounding monstrous, one must say that Wyatt failed to do what he was trying to do, and a literary historian of the sixteenth century will have to censure him.

Luckily I am spared this duty and can without reservation approve. Between Wyatt and the present day lie four hundred years of prosodic practice and development. Thanks to the work of our predecessors any schoolboy can today write the regular iambs which Wyatt, struggling to escape from the metrical anarchy of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, found so difficult. Our problem in the twentieth century is not how to write iambs but how not to write in them from automatic habit when they are not to our genuine purpose. What for Wyatt was a failure is for us a blessing. Must a work be censored for being beautiful by accident? I suppose it must, but a poet will always have a sneaking regard for luck because he knows the role which it plays in poetic composition. Something unexpected is always turning up, and though he knows that the Censor has to pass it, the memory of the lucky dip is what he treasures.

A young poet may be conceited about his good taste, but he is under no illusions about his ignorance. He is well aware of how much poetry there is that he would like but of which he has never heard, and that there are learned men who have read it. His problem is knowing which learned man to ask, for it is not just more good poetry that he wants to read, but more of the kind he likes. He judges a scholarly or critical book less by the text than by the quotations, and all his life, I think, when he reads a work of criticism, he will find himself trying to guess what taste lies behind the critic's judgment. Like Matthew Arnold I have my Touchstones, but they are for testing critics, not poets. Many of them concern taste in other matters than poetry or even literature, but here are four questions which, could I examine a critic, I should ask him:—

Do you like, and by like I really mean like, not approve of on principle:

1. Long lists of proper names such as the Old Testament genealogies or the Catalogue of ships in *The Iliad*?

2. Riddles and all other ways of not calling a spade a spade?
3. Complicated verse forms of great technical difficulty, such as Englyns, Drott-Kvaetts, Sestinas, even if their content is trivial?
4. Conscious theatrical exaggeration, pieces of baroque flattery like Dryden's welcome to the Duchess of Ormond?

If a critic could truthfully answer "yes" to all four, then I should trust his judgment implicitly on all literary matters.

5

IT is not uncommon, it is even usual, for a poet to write reviews, compile anthologies, compose critical introductions. It is one of his main sources of income. He may even find himself lecturing. In such chores he has little to offset his lack of scholarship, but that little he has.

His lazy habit of only reading what he likes will at least have taught him one lesson, that to be worth attacking a book must first be worth reading. The greatest critical study of a single figure that I know of, *The Case of Wagner*, is a model of what such an attack should be. Savage as he often is, Nietzsche never allows the reader to forget for one instant that Wagner is an extraordinary genius and that, for all which may be wrong with it, his music is of the highest importance. Indeed it was this book which first taught me to listen to Wagner, about whom I had previously held silly preconceived notions. Another model is D. H. Lawrence's *Studies in Classical American Literature*. I remember my disappointment when, after reading the essay on Fenimore Cooper which is highly critical, I hurried off to read him. Unfortunately, I did not find Cooper nearly as exciting as Lawrence had made him sound.

The second advantage which a poet possesses is that such satisfactions to the ego as the writing of poetry can provide have been taken care of in his case. I should not expect a poet turned critic to become either a prig, a critic's critic, a romantic novelist, or a maniac. By the prig, I mean the critic for whom no actual poem is good enough since the only one that would be is the poem he would like to write himself but cannot. Reading his criticism, one gets the impression that he would rather a poem were bad than good. His twin, the critic's critic, shows no obvious resentment; indeed, on the surface he appears to idolize the poet about whom he is writing; but his critical analysis of his idol's work is so much more complicated and difficult than the work itself as to deprive someone who has not yet read it of all wish to do so. He too, one suspects, has a secret grievance. He finds it unfortunate and regrettable that before there can be criticism there has to be a poem to criticize. For him a poem is not a work of art by somebody else; it is his own discovered document.

The romantic novelist is a much jollier figure. His happy hunting ground is the field of unanswerable questions, particularly if they concern the private lives of authors. Since the questions to which he devotes his life — he is often an extremely learned gentleman — can never be answered, he is free to indulge his fancies without misgivings. And why shouldn't he? How much duller the Variorum edition of the Shakespeare sonnets would be without him. Jolliest of all is the maniac. The commonest of his kind is the man who believes that poetry is written in ciphers, but there are many other kinds. My favorite is the John Bellendon Ker who set out to prove that English nursery rhymes were originally written in a form of Old Dutch invented by himself.

Whatever his defects, a poet at least thinks a poem more important than anything which can be said about it, he would rather it were good than bad, the last thing he wants is that it should be like one of his own, and his experience as a maker should have taught him to recognize quickly whether a critical question is important, unimportant but real, unreal because unanswerable, or just absurd.

He will know, for example, that knowledge of an artist's life, temperament, and opinions is unimportant to an understanding of his art, but that a similar knowledge about a critic may be important to an understanding of his judgments. If we knew every detail of Shakespeare's life, our reading of his plays would be little changed, if at all; but how much less interesting *The Lives of the Poets* would be if we knew nothing else about Johnson.

He will know, to take an instance of an unanswerable question, that if the date of the Shakespeare sonnets can ever be fixed, it will not be fixed by poring over Sonnet CVII. His experience as a maker of poems will make him reason something like this: The feeling expressed here is the not uncommon feeling — All's well with my love and all's well with the world at large. The feeling that all is well with the world at large can be produced in many ways. It *can* be produced by an occasion of public rejoicing, some historical event like the defeat of the Armada or the successful passing of the Queen's climacteric, but it does not have to be. The same feeling can be aroused by a fine day. The figures employed in the lines

The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured
And the sad augurs mock their own presage,
Incertainties now crown themselves assured
And peace proclaims olives of endless age

come from literature and contain no specific historical reference. They could have been suggested to Shakespeare by some historical event, but he could have written them without one. Further, even if they were so prompted, the date of the event does not have to be contemporary with the occasion celebrated in the sonnet. A present instance of a

feeling always recalls past instances and their circumstances, so that it is possible, if the poet chooses, to employ images suggested by the circumstances of a past occasion to describe the present if the feeling is the same. What Shakespeare has written contains no historical clue.

Because of his limited knowledge, a poet would generally be wise, when talking about poetry, to choose either some general subject upon which if his conclusions are true in a few cases, they must be true in most, or some detailed matter which only requires the intensive study of a few works. He may have something sensible to say about woods, even about leaves, but you should never trust him on trees.

Speaking for myself, the questions which interest me most when reading a poem are two. The first is technical: "Here is a verbal contraption. How does it work?" The second is, in the broadest sense, moral: "What kind of a guy inhabits this poem? What is his notion of the good life or the good place? His notion of the Evil One? What does he conceal from the reader? What does he conceal even from himself?"

And you must not be surprised if he should have nothing but platitudes to say; firstly because he will always find it hard to believe that a poem needs expounding, and secondly because he doesn't consider poetry quite that important; any poet, I believe, will echo Miss Marianne Moore's words: "*I, too, dislike it.*"

6

AWAY back we left a young poet who had just written his first real poem and was wondering if it would be his last. We must assume that it was not, that he has arrived on the literary scene in the sense that now people pass judgment on his work without having read it. Twenty years have gone by. The table of his Mad Hatter's Tea-Party has gotten much longer and there are thousands of new faces, some charming, some quite horrid. Down at the far end, some of those who used to be so amusing have turned into crashing bores or fallen asleep, a sad change which has often come over later guests after holding forth for a few years. Boredom does not necessarily imply disapproval; I still think Rilke a great poet though I cannot read him any more.

Many of the books which have been most important to the poet have not been works of poetry or criticism but books which have altered his way of looking at the world and himself, and a lot of these, probably, are what an expert in their field would call "unsound." The expert, no doubt, is right, but it is not for a poet to judge; his duty is to be grateful.

And among the experiences which have influenced his writing, a number may have been experiences of other arts. I know, for example, that through

listening to music I have learned much about how to organize a poem, how to obtain variety and contrast through changes of tone, tempo, and rhythm, though I could not say just how. Man is an analogy-drawing animal; that is his great good fortune. His danger is of treating analogies as identities, of saying, for instance, "Poetry should be as much like music as possible." I suspect that the people who are most likely to say this are the tone-deaf. The more one loves another art, the less likely it is that one will wish to trespass upon its domain.

During these twenty years, one thing has never changed since he wrote his first poem. Every time he writes a new one, the same question occurs to him: "Will it ever happen again?", but now he begins to hear his Censor saying: "It must never happen again." Having spent twenty years learning to be himself, he finds that he must now start learning not to be himself. At first he may think this means no more than keeping a sharper lookout for obsessive rhythms, ties of expression, privately numinous words, but presently he discovers that the command not to imitate himself can mean something harder than that. It can mean that he should refrain from writing a poem which might turn out to be a good one, and even an admired one. He learns that, if on finishing a poem he is convinced that it is good, the chances are that the poem is a self-imitation. The most hopeful sign that it is not is the feeling of complete uncertainty: "Either this is quite good or it is quite bad, I can't tell." And, of course, it may very well be quite bad. Discovering oneself is a passive process because the self is already there. Time and attention are all that it takes. But changing oneself means changing in one direction rather than another, and towards one goal rather than another. The goal may be unknown but movement is impossible without an hypothesis as to where it lies. It is at this point, therefore, that a poet often begins to take an interest in the theory of poetry and even to develop one of his own.

The evidence upon which the poet bases his conclusions consists of his own experiences in writing and his private judgments upon his own work. Looking back, he sees many occasions on which he took a wrong turning or walked up a blind alley, mistakes which, it seems to him now, he could have avoided, had he been more conscious at the time of the choice he was making. Looking over the poems he has written, he finds that, irrespective of their merits, there are some which he particularly dislikes and some which are his favorites. Of one he may think: "This is full of faults, but it is the kind of poem I ought to write more of"; of another: "This may be all right in itself but it's exactly the sort of thing I must never do again." The principles he formulates, therefore, are intended to guard himself against making unnecessary mistakes and provide him with a guesswork map of the future.

They are as fallible, of course, as all guesses. But there is a difference between a project which may fail and one which must.

In trying to formulate principles, a poet may have a desire to justify his writing poetry at all, and in recent years this motive seems to have grown stronger. The Rimbaud Myth — the tale of a great poet who ceases writing, not because, like Coleridge, he has nothing more to say, but because he chooses to stop — may not be true, I am pretty sure it is not, but as a myth it haunts the artistic conscience of this century.

7

KNOWING all this, and knowing that you know it, I shall now proceed to make some general statements of my own. I hope they are not nonsense, but I cannot be sure. At least, even as emotive noises, I find them useful to me.

Some cultures make a social distinction between the sacred and the profane, certain human beings are publicly regarded as numinous, and a clear division is made between certain actions which are regarded as sacred rites of great importance to the well-being of society, and everyday profane behavior. In such cultures, if they are advanced enough to recognize poetry as an art, the poet has a public — even a professional status — and his poetry is either public or esoteric.

There are other cultures, like our own, in which the distinction between the sacred and the profane is not socially recognized. Either the distinction is denied or it is regarded as an individual matter of taste with which society is not and should not be concerned. In such cultures, the poet has an amateur status and his poetry is neither public nor esoteric but private. That is to say, he writes neither as a citizen nor as a member of a group of professional adepts, but as a single person to be read by other single persons. Private poetry is not necessarily obscure; for someone not in the know, ancient esoteric poetry can be more obscure than the wildest modern. Nor, needless to say, is private poetry necessarily worse than other kinds.

In what follows, the terms Primary and Secondary Imagination are taken, of course, from the thirteenth chapter of *Biographia Literaria*. I have adopted them because, though my description may differ from Coleridge's, I believe we are both trying to describe the same phenomena.

Herewith, then, what I might describe as a literary dogmatic psalm, a kind of private *quicunque vult*.

The concern of the Primary Imagination, its only concern, is with sacred beings and sacred events. The sacred is that to which it is obliged to respond; the profane is that to which it cannot respond and therefore does not know. The profane is known to other faculties of the mind, but not to the Primary

Imagination. A sacred being cannot be anticipated; it must be encountered. On encounter the imagination has no option but to respond. All imaginations do not recognize the same sacred beings or events, but every imagination responds to those it recognizes in the same way. The impression made upon the imagination by any sacred being is of an overwhelming but undefinable importance — an unchangeable quality, an Identity, as Keats said. I-am-that-I-am is what every sacred being seems to say. The impression made by a sacred event is of an overwhelming but undefinable significance.

The response of the imagination to such a presence or significance is a passion of awe. This awe may vary greatly in intensity and range in tone from joyous wonder to panic dread. A sacred being may be attractive or repulsive — a swan or an octopus — beautiful or ugly — a toothless hag or a fair young child — good or evil — a Beatrice or a Belle Dame sans Merci — historical fact or fiction — a person met on the road or an image encountered in a story or a dream — it may be noble or something unmentionable in a drawing room, it may be anything it likes on condition, but this condition is absolute, that it arouse awe. The realm of the Primary Imagination is without freedom, sense of time, or humor. Whatever determines this response or lack of response lies below consciousness and is of concern to psychology, not art.

Some sacred beings seem to be sacred to all imaginations at all times. The Moon, for example, Fire, Snakes, and those four important beings which can only be defined in terms of non-being, Darkness, Silence, Nothing, Death. Some, like kings, are only sacred to all within a certain culture, some only to members of a social group — the Latin language among humanists — and some are only sacred to a single imagination. Many of us have sacred landscapes which probably all have much in common, but there will almost certainly be details which are peculiar to each. An imagination can acquire new sacred beings and it can lose old ones to the profane. Sacred beings can be acquired by social contagion but not consciously. One cannot be taught to recognize a sacred being, one has to be converted. As a rule, perhaps, with advancing age sacred events gain in importance over sacred beings.

A sacred being may also be an object of desire but the imagination does not desire it. A desire can be a sacred being but the imagination is without desire. In the presence of the sacred, it is self-forgetful; in its absence the very type of the profane, "The most unpoetical of all God's creatures." A sacred being may also demand to be loved or obeyed, it may reward or punish, but the imagination is unconcerned: a law can be a sacred being, but the imagination does not obey. To the imagination a sacred being is self-sufficient, and like Aristotle's God can have no need of friends.

The Secondary Imagination is of another character and at another mental level. It is active not passive, and its categories are not the sacred and the profane, but the beautiful and the ugly. Our dreams are full of sacred beings and events — indeed, they may well contain nothing else; but we cannot distinguish in dreams — or so it seems to me, I may be wrong — between the beautiful and the ugly. Beauty and ugliness pertain to Form, not to Being. The Primary Imagination only recognizes one kind of being, the sacred, but the Secondary Imagination recognizes both beautiful and ugly forms. To the Primary Imagination a sacred being is that which it is. To the Secondary Imagination a beautiful form is as it ought to be, an ugly form as it ought not to be. Observing the beautiful, it has feelings of satisfaction, pleasure, absence of conflict; observing the ugly, the contrary feelings. It does not desire the beautiful, but an ugly form arouses in it a desire that its ugliness be corrected and made beautiful. It does not worship the beautiful; it approves of it and can give reasons for its approval. The Secondary Imagination has, one might say, a bourgeois nature. It approves of regularity, of spatial symmetry and temporal repetition, of law and order: it disapproves of loose ends, irrelevance, and mess.

Lastly the Secondary Imagination is social and craves agreement with other minds. If I think a form beautiful and you think it ugly, we both cannot help agreeing that one of us must be wrong, whereas if I think something is sacred and you think it is profane, neither of us will dream of arguing the matter.

Both kinds of imagination are essential to the health of the mind. Without the inspiration of sacred awe, its beautiful forms would soon become banal, its rhythms mechanical; without the activity of the Secondary Imagination the passivity of the Primary would be the mind's undoing; sooner or later its sacred beings would possess it, it would come to think of itself as sacred, exclude the outer world as profane and so go mad.

8

THE impulse to create a work of art is felt when, in certain persons, the passive awe provoked by sacred beings or events is transformed into a desire to express that awe in a rite of worship or homage, and to be fit homage this rite must be beautiful. This rite has no magical or idolatrous intention; nothing is expected in return. Nor is it, in a Christian sense, an act of devotion. If it praises the Creator, it does so indirectly by praising His creatures, among which may be human notions of the Divine Nature. With God as redeemer, it has, so far as I can see, little if anything to do.

In poetry the rite is verbal; it pays homage by naming. I suspect that the predisposition of a

mind towards the poetic medium may have its origin in an error. A nurse, let us suppose, says to a child, "Look at the moon!" The child looks and for him this is a sacred encounter. In his mind the word *moon* is not a name of a sacred object but one of its most important properties and, therefore, numinous. The notion of writing poetry cannot occur to him, of course, until he has realized that names and things are not identical and that there cannot be an intelligible sacred language, but I wonder if, when he has discovered the social nature of language, he would attach such importance to one of its uses, that of naming, if he had not previously made this false identification.

The pure poem, in the French sense of *la poésie pure*, would be, I suppose, a celebration of the numinous-in-itself in abstraction from all cases and devoid of any profane reference whatsoever — a sort of *sanctus, sanctus, sanctus*. If it could be written, which is doubtful, it would not necessarily be the best poem.

A poem is a rite; hence its formal and ritualistic character. Its use of language is deliberately and ostentatiously different from talk. Even when it employs the diction and rhythms of conversation, it employs them as a deliberate informality, presupposing the norm with which they are intended to contrast.

The form of a rite must be beautiful, exhibiting, for example, balance, closure, and aptness to that which it is the form of. It is over this last quality of aptness that most of our aesthetic quarrels arise, and must arise, whenever our sacred and profane worlds differ.

To the Eyes of a Miser, a Guinea is far more beautiful than the Sun & a bag worn with the use of Money has more beautiful proportions than a Vine filled with Grapes.

Blake, it will be noticed, does not accuse the Miser of lacking imagination.

The value of a profane thing lies in what it usefully does, the value of a sacred thing lies in what it *is*; a sacred thing may also have a function but it does not have to. The apt name for a profane being, therefore, is the word or words that accurately describe his function — a Mr. Smith, a Mr. Weaver. The apt name for a sacred being is the word or words which worthily express his importance — Son of Thunder, The Well-Wishing One.

Great changes in artistic style always reflect some alteration in the frontier between the sacred and profane in the imagination of a society. Thus, to take an architectural example, a seventeenth-century monarch had the same function as that of a modern state official — he had to govern. But in designing his palace, the Baroque architect did not

aim, as a modern architect aims when designing a governmental building, at making an office in which the king could govern as easily and efficiently as possible; he was trying to make a home fit for God's earthly representative to inhabit; in so far as he thought at all about what the king would do in it as a ruler, he thought of his ceremonial, not his practical actions.

Even today few people find a functionally furnished living room beautiful because, to most of us, a sitting room is not merely a place to sit in; it is also a shrine for father's chair.

Thanks to the social nature of language, a poet can relate any one sacred being or event to any other. The relation may be harmonious, an ironic contrast or a tragic contradiction like the great man or the beloved and death; he can relate them to every other concern of the mind, the demands of desire, reason, and conscience, and he can bring them into contact and contrast with the profane. Again the consequences can be happy, ironic, tragic, and, in relation to the profane, comic. How many poems have been written, for example, upon one of these three themes: —

This was sacred but now it is profane. Alas, or thank goodness!

This is sacred but ought it to be?

This is sacred but is that so important?

But it is from the sacred encounters of his imagination that a poet's impulse to write a poem arises. Thanks to language, he need not name them directly unless he wishes: he can describe one in terms of another and translate those that are private or irrational or socially unacceptable into such as are acceptable to reason and society. Some poems are directly *about* the sacred beings they were written *for*, others are not, and in that case no reader can tell what was the original encounter which provided the impulse for the poem. Nor, probably, can the poet himself. Every poem he writes involves his whole past. Every love poem, for instance, is hung with trophies of lovers gone, and among these there may be some very peculiar objects indeed. The lovely lady of the present may number among her predecessors an overshot water-wheel. But the encounter, be it novel or renewed by recollection from the past, must be suffered by a poet before he can write a genuine poem.

Whatever its actual content and overt interest, every poem is rooted in imaginative awe. Poetry can do a hundred and one things, delight, sadden, disturb, amuse, instruct — it may express every possible shade of emotion, and describe every conceivable kind of event, but there is only one thing that all poetry must do: it must praise all it can for being and for happening.



In the old days, most people approached the end of their lives in the privacy of their homes with the family to attend them and with only a minimum of medicine to prolong life. Our big metropolitan hospitals have provided care and alleviation for those in pain, but they have also made of dying, as this widow tells, an ordeal which has somehow deprived death of its dignity.

A WAY OF DYING

ANONYMOUS

I

THERE is a new way of dying today. It is the slow passage via modern medicine. If you are very ill modern medicine can save you. If you are going to die it can prevent you from so doing for a very long time.

We cannot inquire from the dead what they have felt about this deterrent. As they fight for spiritual release, and are constantly dragged back by modern medicine to try again, does their agony augment? To those who stand and watch, this seems like a ghastly imposition against God's will be done. Apparently there is no mercy which the family may bestow at such a time. Only in an entirely hopeless situation may doctors desist in their effort to preserve life.

Enter the sickroom and sit with your beloved, and endure the long watch while this incredible battle between spirit and medicine takes place. It may continue for weeks, sometimes for months. But the victim is going to die. It is just a question of time. Every new formula, all the latest wonder drugs, the tricks and artificial wizardry, are now prescribed and brought to bear. The dreary dreadful days and nights proceed. "We are doing all we can," say the doctors. The patient, however, is too far from us already to tell us in what way he is doing all he can.

He came out of surgery alive. He had not succumbed to this first ordeal. Could I let my tears fall now and then rush in to hug him? Could I tell him there would never be an end to us? Could I tell him he had won this fight against all odds, that he was brave and fine? I went to his room and found that he was just barely there. The intensity of quiet held me spellbound. Thus they return from contesting the inevitable. How desperately he must have tried to gain his reprieve. Softly I let the waves of my love pass over him, believing their spiritual balm might somehow help him. And then I left, as they told me to do, and went home.

On the surface one soon becomes accustomed to the rhythm of hospital routine. The early morning telephone call, then the visit, away for the lunch hour, back to the hospital in the afternoon. Sometimes a return there at night, but in any event a final telephone call. This becomes a regular schedule. At home one goes through a kindred round of activity. Any activity in order not to remove the armor. One laughs too much mirthless laughter and drinks with the realization that this is the hour of strain, when respect for the stricken demands that one carry on, achieve it how one may.

The intravenous feeding globes showed yellow and white, while the patient's arms were red and purple from so many hours of this treatment. He lay pitifully upon his pillows watching the liquid drain. I sat in the chair by the window endlessly, but he did not care. He did not want to waste his strength in talk. He must have known it was too late for that. Sometimes, very rarely, he would ask a question, wondering what had brought him there. Then I would tell him about the emergency operation, and he would thank me, saying he was so glad to get it straightened out in his mind.

No one thought he could survive a necessary second operation. This I could sense, but the formula called for hope and a language communicating merely that "the patient is holding his own." What does that mean exactly? Is it like lying back on your oars and taking a last look at some beautiful aspect of color or scenery that you wish to inscribe permanently upon your mind? Does it compare to enjoying the swell of the ocean as it rocks one gently before assuming its surf form and careening up the beach? Or can it be that a very horrible interlude occurs, a space of time and place where one is lost, a no man's land where one creeps and crawls about in twilight, calling and searching for some clue that is recognizable. An agony of trying to reach shores unseen because the fog is thick and mystifying and

the bodily pain so terrible that all one is really crying for is death. "Where is my end?" must be the constant chant.

One afternoon I arrived at the hospital to make my usual visit and found his room empty. Surprised, I asked the reason at the corridor desk. "Your patient is up in surgery. There was need for some repair" was the answer. I was afraid, and I was proved right to be so, as the wound was raveling. But not until the assistant surgeon came into that sad little waiting room and talked with me could I have guessed the dreadful ordeal which had just occurred. It had been necessary to perform this operation without anesthesia. I am not brave about physical pain and I began to feel the nausea of fear creeping over me at this news. "There is no use going in to see him," said the doctor; "he will not know you, and now that it is over we are going to give him some sedative." I knew that I must see him. There would never be any aspect of him that I would not want to know. And now, if we were nearing the end of our time together, I must memorize every detail of this scene. Perhaps I would need to draw on it for courage some day when I should be riddled with pain and bereft. He was sitting bolt upright in his bed. They had put the metal bedsides up so that he would not fall out. His eyes and face were wild and he was declaiming, though one could not understand him. The long thin arms were still all bruised, red and blue. I choked with anguish and horror, and the spectacle was written into me with a raw indelibility. My heart swam in a stream of pity, and the thought that I could do nothing to help him nearly madened me.

Then came a morning when his delirium passed. There had been three savage days when he would call for me and cry out to have the sights removed which were disturbing him. He was being tortured and torn by imagery that was not present in the room. He could not be left alone a moment. He would try to arise. And once I had to throw myself across his chest, his poor sick desperate body, until the ringing of the bell brought help to me. But on this morning there was a change. He was quiet and absolutely conscious. His face was flushed and he was not enunciating too well. He told me he had something important to tell the doctor.

When the assistant surgeon came I rose as usual and stood behind the screen at the doorsill. I heard him clearly, every word, and it wrung my heart and sent my soul spinning. "I can stand anything you have to tell me, Doctor," he said, "and I realize how badly off I am, but you must give me help, real help. I can't pull myself up by my bootstraps any longer."

He lay back. I waited. The doctor told him they would do for him what they could, and left. I reentered.

"There you are," he said, "they just don't care."

I took his hand. "I promise you, my darling, that I will stand in that hall until your surgeon comes by, and insist that he give you what you want."

Later in the day the sedatives had their effect. He appeared drowsy and relaxed. When the nurse went to supper I fed him his ice cream. God . . . I thought; ice cream when one is kneeling at the threshold! I kissed him good night but he was not really there.

2

I HAD been asleep only a short time when suddenly I was awakened by the rasp and ring of the telephone. A step at my door. "The hospital is on the wire," the voice said. At the telephone I heard: "Your husband went into a coma at eleven o'clock. We are doing all we can. We do not know the reason for the coma." I said Amen as I dragged on my clothes.

The glaring, merciless rays from a powerful ceiling light displayed what was a human form, now portrayed in ghastly hue, in hunched position, with two tubes one in each nostril, eyes half open, breathing a noise of horror, while the oxygen tank at one side bubbled, bubbled merrily, and the nurse stood counting the heartbeat, taking the pulse. I saw, I reeled, I froze to my depths. I managed somehow then to leave. We sat in that same little waiting room hour after hour after hour. We stayed there sixteen hours.

Many times I tiptoed down the hall and looked again into that dreadful room. It was always exactly the same. They brought us coffee in the night. We talked and sometimes we dozed. At 8 A.M. the place began to come alive. I stirred. I went out into the morning, I walked about the garden, I stood beneath his window and I shook my fist at God. "They can't do this to you any longer. I must put a stop to it," I cried. I wanted to sob but I did not dare. When the first doctor came on duty I accosted him and begged that they cease this torture. He explained that except under the most unusual circumstances they had to maintain life while they could. Very well, I thought, if it has to be so, so be it.

We had breakfast and time dragged on. I went down the hall to the room again. I called on all my courage and I went in to stay. The day nurse whispered to me that his pulse was very poor, that he could not last much longer. I stood at the side of the bed with my hands clenched together, a little behind him so that I could look down upon his still beautiful head. And when I wanted I could look out the window at the clear blue morning sky. I stood and watched with my beloved while he attempted to cross the great divide. The oxygen bubbled merrily, it sang of its false gift of life. "I am a fake," it hissed and sang and purred. My own heart was pounding at such a pace I thought it might burst. It almost shook me. I have never

been here before, I thought, and I am very much afraid. How difficult it is for him to gain the flood tide, and how can I assist in this perilous crossing? I was growing faint. I knelt down and put my arms and head on the side of a chair. I prayed a constant and continuous chant of "Please, God! Please, God!" I tried my utmost to help him. I was utterly lost in a paralysis of effort when — bang — the door burst open and with noisy footsteps a nurse had intruded on the scene. I sprang to my feet and faced her, and my distress was real. I wanted to kick her tray of medication and knock her from the room. She was here to snare him back just as he might have reached the other shore. I asked her why. "Doctor's orders," she replied. "I am to give him a hypo." I staggered out the door; there was nothing else to do.

For a long while I walked about the garden with my son. I picked up an oak leaf already turned red and put it in my handbag. It will always be somewhere in my room, saying, "On such a day you lost your love." It will solace me to see it because on such a day I was still doing for him what I could. It was hard not to weep, not to submit to anguish. The fine young man who walked at my side doubtless helped me retain my poise. What good being old if incapable of setting an example? We went back inside to the waiting room. It was Sunday, and the room was noisy and crowded with visitors. A woman in a wrapper came to me and said, "I'm glad your husband is better. He was quiet last night. I know because I am opposite his room." I could only nod and hope that the armor would not fail me. The afternoon nurse came on duty. By now I was seated in the hall and my son sat on the floor at my side. So much fuss and noise on Sunday, I thought; how dreary it is in a hospital. Finally the medical doctor appeared and addressed me. "Well," he said, "he's rallied." I remember

feeling almost no emotion when I replied, "How horrible." So, after sixteen hours, we went home to sleep.

I was sleeping hard when I felt a cold draft, and I got out of bed and shut my window. I was just climbing back when the ring of the telephone caught me. I knew. He was too quick for them. He had come to me directly and placed his lover's hand on my shoulder. He had said good-by to me in his own way and reassured me that his spirit would always be at my side. "My darling" was all I could say. Of course we went directly to the hospital, driving without panic or unnecessary tears. I was calm knowing that he deserved to be released. I asked my son to step to the door of his room for a moment and render homage; then I went in and stood beside him. How unbelievable that you are gone! I kissed his forehead, which was still warm; I laid my hand on his; I let the scene permeate my being so that it would leave its indelible mark. That was all. Quite quietly I tiptoed out. We gave our instructions and went home.

I say "Hello, darling" to the night sky, the moon, the stars; to the daylight creating a vivid brilliance; and to the sunset so various in beauty stirring in me the wish to touch that distance and fathom it. When I say hello at these times I have a desperate desire to weep, feeling so poignantly my loss, but knowing also that such weeping would be to no avail. One must live out one's life. That is all there is to do. That is all there has ever been since the day that one was born. Struggle to fulfill oneself by living to the utmost. Efface ego and be at peace.

I am the emblem of a love affair that was important because it saw, and felt, and held great beauty. Through sickness and health, for richer for poorer, there remained always a magic bond until death did us part.

ATLANTIC "FIRSTS"

FOR eleven years the *Atlantic* has held out a special incentive to short-story writers. In January, 1946, we began to publish what we called *Atlantic* "Firsts" — short stories by unestablished writers making their first appearance in our pages. We announced that these stories would be paid for at our top fee, and that prizes would be awarded to those two which, in the opinion of the *Atlantic* editors, were of special distinction.

1956 PRIZE WINNERS

First Prize of \$750 awarded to

WINONA MCCLINTIC
for "A Heart of Furious Fancies" in the
November issue

Second Prize of \$250 awarded to

RICHARD YOUNG THURMAN
for "The Credit Line" in the
July issue



DILLON ANDERSON, who served as Special Assistant to the President on National Security Affairs and who took an active part in the Geneva Conference, has now resumed his law practice in Houston. Luckily for the Atlantic, Mr. Anderson has a special facility for writing on trains and planes; in these moments he has found time to compose two volumes of short stories, *I and Claudie* and *Claudie's Kinfolks*, and to give us biographical accounts of his preposterous friend, Billingsley, his companion at the poker table and in the hunting field.

CHAIRMAN BILLINGSLEY

by DILLON ANDERSON

IT ALL began one September afternoon several years ago when Mrs. Billingsley innocently attended a tea given by a college classmate named Vera. Vera, a frustrated type anyway, if you ask me, had laid on this tea for the explicit purpose of bringing to the attention of Mrs. Billingsley and a dozen or so other "civic-minded girls" (then in their late forties) the deplorable condition of the city parks — "shabby old benches, dirty, messy comfort stations, and grass and weeds uncut all over the place."

"I really think it's a crime," Vera told Mrs. Billingsley and the other girls, "and the time has come to *do something* about it." She ended her remarks with an ACTION gesture.

One of the girls, who had been to England recently, said, "Hear! Hear!"

There being no one there who was adequately prepared to defend the deplorable condition of the city parks (and moreover no one among them who had even been in one for several years) they formed on the spot the "Citizens' Committee for the Beautification of Our City Parks." Then they elected Vera chairman by acclamation.

Now that they were voting, the girls proceeded to elect from their number a vice chairman, a second vice chairman, a recording and a corresponding secretary; then Vera appointed an executive committee, a by-laws committee, a membership committee, a nominating committee, and a special projects committee, and authorized the formation of subcommittees.

With these organizational details behind her, Vera came back to the deplorable condition of the city parks and reminded the girls that the Citizens' Committee should do something about it. "This thing has been let go," she pointed out, "about as far as it can without some ACTION."

"Hear! Hear!"

"That will be the task of the steering committee," Vera announced. Then, "Oh my — I haven't appointed the steering committee yet, have I? Well, I will, and that committee will be the one to call on the mayor and demand that something be done about cleaning up and beautifying our city parks. What we need on that committee is a *man* — a man who can talk man-to-man with that *awful old mayor*."

At this moment Billingsley, who was on the golf course several miles away searching in the rough for a lost ball, felt a momentary twinge in the side of his head; and according to one of his companions in the foursome he actually flinched, as if some unseen telepathic bolt had struck him in the temple. For at this same instant Mrs. Billingsley, who had sat in silence at Vera's tea until she had become neither officer nor member of the executive committee or even of a subcommittee, felt moved to speak. "Richard is a good friend of the mayor," Mrs. Billingsley volunteered. "They hunt together. Maybe —"

"Providential," Vera cried. "We'll put Richard Billingsley on the steering committee. We'll even make him chairman."

"But —" Mrs. Billingsley started. It was too late though, for Vera was in high gear by this time, using the overdrive supplied by the entirely novel concept of Billingsley in a civic role.

"When," Vera continued, "do you suppose the steering committee could go into action? There is not a bit of time to waste."

"I'll speak to Richard tonight," Mrs. Billingsley said absently, since by this time she had begun to realize that it was already late afternoon, after which came the night, the meeting with her husband, and the necessity of following through in the teeth of (a) the near end of the fishing season, (b) the climax of the baseball season, (c) the opening of

the dove and football seasons, and (d) the "best golfing weather of the whole damn year."

The subject was not broached that evening until after Billingsley had had his second highball, into which the little woman had slipped one extra jigger of mellow and mellowing bourbon.

"Certainly not! What the hell's got into you, Cynthia? I never heard of such a thing. What have you been doing in the parks? I never go there. What's gone wrong with the parks anyway?" were Billingsley's introductory responses as he jumped to his feet and strode around the room. He paused for more breath, not expecting and not getting any answer. "You mean you got me put on a committee to go to the mayor and beef about the city parks? Why, damn it, Booby'd think I'd lost my mind" — Booby being the nickname of Honorable Elbert McEvoy Duncan, the mayor.

Now Billingsley is a large character with large features, a thick neck, and considerable hair growing out of his nose and ears. Also he has a loud, coarse voice, built naturally for insults and negative comments. Moreover, he always wears a forbidding frown after as bad a round as he'd had on the golf course that day. And he brought all these natural attributes to bear on his response to the idea.

Mrs. Billingsley, on the other hand, is a petite, patrician type with trim ankles and wrists, small feet, a very feminine build, and a soft, cultured voice. Also she has another quality: she *knows Billingsley*.

Thus she did not argue with the great man; she only listened to some more of his guff along the same line — "How'd you ever get it into your head that I'd go with a bunch of women to call on Booby about the parks? Do you realize I'd have to go and look at the parks before I could stand up and complain about the shape they're in?"

This could happen to anybody

The next afternoon, on his way to the ball game, Billingsley happened to drive right alongside one of the parks. It seemed, he said later, to be in fairly good shape. He noted that, aside from a little need for repair here and there, a little painting of the benches, and some cleaning up, it would do for a city park. Average anyway. In fact the kids and spooners seemed to be enjoying it about as usual, and what the hell!

The repetition of these last three words at breakfast the next morning caused Cynthia Billingsley to wilt and weep, while Billingsley stalked out of the house. But when he got to his office, he called Booby Duncan on the phone and told him what he'd got into. Booby said, "Maybe the ladies are right; the park superintendent has been away on vacation, and you know how it is when the cat's away. Ha! Ha! But he's back now. I'll call him in, and in a week or so the parks will be spick-and-span again. You can tell your ladies that. And don't

forget to tell them I had it done for them. Election's coming up soon, you know, Dick."

Well, word gets around, and even before the minutes of the first meeting of the Citizens' Committee for the Beautification of Our City Parks had been read and approved at the second meeting, Vera knew Billingsley had got results. But, more important, Mrs. Billingsley had got her neat, petite, size 3½A foot a little further in the door of Billingsley's life.

Word of Billingsley's extraordinary effectiveness as a committee chairman spread rapidly, especially in ladies' circles, and the story grew from the mere telephone call that Billingsley had made (actually, he claimed later, to get the thing off his mind before the dove season really got under way) to far more formidable proportions.

"That old Mayor Duncan really sat up and took notice when the steering committee called on him," Vera confided to a little group in the Country Club cocktail bar a few days later. "He was ready to go and clean up the parks with his own bare hands before they got through with him. I can tell you our committee had him fairly shaking in his boots. And you should see the parks now" (which Vera hadn't). "I don't know what we'd have done without the outstanding leadership of Dick Billingsley. It takes people like that to make things really hum in a community!"

Betty Boggis, the wife of the president of the Rotary Club, was having a frozen daiquiri close by and was thoroughly tuned in on Vera's remarks. Betty could hardly wait until night to tell Earl Boggis, the president himself, about Billingsley's performance on the city park problem. So the very next day Billingsley received a telephone call.

"Dick," the Rotary president said, "you old son of a gun!"

Billingsley flinched, as he'd never cared for Earl Boggis, the Rotarian. He said, "Uh! Huh!"

"The chairman of my membership committee has just given me the finest report he's turned in since I appointed him," Earl boomed. "This is sure good news for Rotary."

"Uh! Huh!"

"You're the newest member of Rotary. We'll call on you this afternoon for the installation ceremony."

"But —" Billingsley started, and Earl was gone from the line.

Billingsley's secretary called Earl right back to say that her boss had been suddenly called out of town on urgent business, and that afternoon Billingsley opened the dove season with a nice kill — the limit, to be exact.

But that night when Billingsley returned sweaty and victorious from the hunt, Mrs. Billingsley proudly showed him the evening paper, with the news of his election to Rotary.

"By God, I won't do it," he said. "Who ever

heard of me having to go to a meeting every Thursday! Don't Earl Boggis know Thursday's a golf day? How stupid can that pushy so-and-so get? That's what I'd like to know!"

But the following Thursday Billingsley attended his first Rotary meeting and was named from the rostrum a member of the membership committee to take the place of one of the most faithful members, who was being transferred to a distant city.

For the first few weeks of his life in Rotary Billingsley lived in what he later recognized as a fool's paradise. He shifted his golf week from Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday to Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday, an accommodation that would have been acceptable except for one thing — the principle involved. And as you will see, this principle, like some evil weevil, was already gnawing away at the base of Billingsley's whole life structure.

One day that same fall he learned out of the blue that Mrs. Billingsley had been put on the program committee of the Ladies Auxiliary of the State Bar Association. He took the news with seemly equanimity, which in Billingsley's case involved a rather blustery comment to the little woman when he came in from the night ball game. Yet within the week Mrs. Billingsley actually waited on him in his office. She came along with the eight other members of the program committee, formally inviting him to speak at the annual meeting of the Ladies Auxiliary the following July, a convocation held concurrently with the meeting of the State Bar Association. The subject of the address: "Our Constitution."

Now Billingsley had attended but one meeting of the State Bar in his nearly thirty years of holding a law license. That had been a number of years back and a disastrous event, as he reluctantly recalled it, since he'd lost several hundred dollars in an all-night crap game. (Those who know him best realize that basically Billingsley's game is poker.) Moreover, Billingsley had never spoken on the Constitution — not that he didn't think well of it; not that he hadn't taken a course in it during law school days; not that he hadn't sworn to support it when he was commissioned a lieutenant in the Army. The Constitution had simply not emerged in his life as something about which one would speak to ladies, singly or in groups.

Later, wondering why in the devil he'd ever agreed to speak to the Ladies Auxiliary, Billingsley rationalized the thing thus: —

(a) The speaking date was over six months away, and any number of things could happen in the meantime: he could die or become desperately ill; there was always the possibility of a disabling accident; and the meeting might be called off.

(b) One of the girls on the committee was indeed an old flame of Billingsley's, dating back to college days, and her always affirmative personality made

it difficult to snort right out the rude *No!* which was his first reaction.

(c) The idea of having a whole roomful of ladies cheering his stout defense of some abused feature of the Constitution lurked enticingly in the shadows of his deliberation.

There was, of course, one other factor — which, though perhaps not recognized by Billingsley, you and I must not overlook. It was the presence in the delegation of the estimable little woman with the tiny feet, and the firm way in which she eyed the great man until he agreed.

The real slough

The restoration and preservation of the state's historical shrines came next in Billingsley's life, and in such an innocuous fashion that he was inextricably implicated in the web before he recognized it. It came in the form of a long-distance call from Knobby Eldridge, a dull-witted classmate of Billingsley's, who had staggered feebly through law school at the very foot of the class and had thereafter all but starved behind his shingle until he'd hit upon the idea of following the circus throughout the state one season, passing out his electioneering cards in the ticket lines. The cards had read: "Elect Elias (Knobby) Eldridge to your Supreme Court. He believes in fair play."

Now you do not turn down a State Supreme Court Justice whose opening pledge is that "all they want is the use of your name on this here thing. Somebody else will do all the work and raise all the damn money."

As chairman of the finance committee of the Committee for the Restoration and Preservation of the State's Historical Shrines, Billingsley had his whole fall ruined the year the drive failed to make its goal. But the movement was finally saved a few days after the deadline when one of the state's major industrial concerns made up the deficit in the drive. Billingsley was on the front page of the Sunday editions, accepting the check which "sent the committee over the top."

And in the very wake of the historical-shrines matter there came the Committee on Slum Clearance, though Billingsley escaped with no more than service on the board; then the house committee at the Country Club, which duties encroached sharply on the time for golf while he tried to resolve a long-standing case of bad blood between the assistant manager of the Club and the chef — a feud which was, incidentally, not settled until the chef's pass at the assistant manager with a meat cleaver resulted in the firing of them both from the Club's payroll. It fell upon Billingsley's capable shoulders to replace them, and before this was accomplished he had been made chairman of the house committee and had received a number of nasty letters from members whose meals at the Club were inadequately prepared and who intimated that the whole

lapse in cuisine and service had been of Billingsley's personal making.

The next year Billingsley chaired the attendance committee of the Rotary Club, hounding and scolding laggard members who, on missing the regular Thursday meetings, failed to drive forty-four miles to an adjacent city where Friday meetings permitted absentees to make up their attendance records. It is true that the hunting season came and went that year without Billingsley's ever popping a cap, but the local Rotary Club won the attendance record for the whole national district, and they gave Billingsley a rising vote of thanks.

Soon no drive escaped him. The Red Cross, the Community Chest, good government, the new county hospital, the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts and the Cub Scouts, the Old Folks' Home, the Orphans' Home, and the Home for Wayward Girls. Within less than two years after he made the phone call about the city parks, Billingsley was principal speaker at a mass meeting organized to launch a city manager amendment to the city charter, and later he debated the issue publicly with Booby Duncan, who had meantime been re-elected mayor on his City Park Betterment platform.

I do not contend that there is a true analogy between opium with its various derivatives on the one hand and committees on the other; but I do here and now verify that the whole succession of events in Billingsley's life brought him, within barely two years, to such a state of slavery to committee demands that one soon began to hear him spoken of in most disparaging terms around locker rooms, hunting clubs, and his old card-playing haunts.

"What ever became of Dick Billingsley?" someone would ask, and the pained looks on the others would be as much as to say, "Poor fellow, he's a real goner." It is true that for a while his friends, including myself for example, would make excuses like "He's been a bit under the weather, I'm told," or "It's the heavy demands of that law practice of his; he's a fine lawyer, you know," or simply, "His wife's got him hooked with some kind of a movement" (thus, mark you, absolving Billingsley of any blame — in the beginning, that is).

Afterwards matters reached a much more candid aspect, and when someone with a good memory would suggest that Billingsley might make out a foursome, fill a vacant seat at a ball game, make a quorum at poker, or possibly open the duck season, the comment would take more blunt form. Like "Oh, don't ask that stuffy bastard; even if he agreed, something would come up where he had to save the state. He's such a damn do-gooder you can't depend on him to show up."

The slough deepens

It was at about this stage in the tragic process of his deterioration that Billingsley took a trip.

He and Mrs. Billingsley were away in the mountains on their first vacation in some twenty-seven years of marital bliss; and at their same lodge in the mountains was this couple, local people and all that but a very cultured twosome, interested in difficult music, abstract art, and the ballet. I mean all the sorts of things that normally would have been a moated wall with broken glass on top between such types and Billingsley.

Well, the canasta games started that summer in the mountains, and when the Billingsleys returned it was the most natural thing in the world, I suppose, for such things to continue, and even to spread, since these canasta-playing people had other local friends of similar overtrained tastes and persuasion.

Then the inevitable happened. They had Billingsley first on the board, then made him chairman of the Contemporary Arts Association. But this was not all. When the ballet company from England came to town, Billingsley was on the reception committee that met the troupe of artists at the train.

"Humph," I remember remarking in my wife's presence when I saw the picture of Billingsley and the ballet element on the first page of the newspaper. "Billingsley must really be slipping. There's a committee he's not chairman of."

"He is due to be next year," my own wife stated with some asperity. "He's more civic-minded and cultured than some people I know."

"You don't say!" I came back. Oh, I really let her have it, and that was the end of the conversation.

Now all this committee activity soon began to have its effect on Billingsley's voice — deleterious, I mean. The raucous, gravelly quality of his voice, known to every baseball umpire, bird dog, caddy, and poker player in our part of the state, gradually gave way to a more brittle and civilized tone. He began to sound like a funeral parlor attendant or one of those men that come to tune the piano — and on the phone you'd think he was a damned elocution teacher.

There were other distressing features of his collapse. Billingsley's nickname in college was Smokehouse, for reasons I never knew, and this one had stuck all through the years among his intimates; but it will give you some idea as to how bad things got when I recount that, after the committee thing had gone on for a year or so, the use of this name became absolute anathema to him. He'd actually hang up on old friends who'd phone him about having a bourbon or two on the way home, if they inadvertently used the old nickname Smokehouse in getting the great man's attention. As a matter of fact, the idea of having a drink at all seemed to lose its savor with him, I discovered after a while — like the afternoon I ran across him downtown and suggested that we lift a couple of quick ones before

going home. He elevated his shaggy eyebrows and replied archly, "I couldn't let the Atheneum group smell liquor on my breath. I'm on my way to a tea there. I'm to introduce Elizabeth Bowen."

"Who the devil —" I started.

"The English authoress," he explained, with an indulgent note in his well-modulated voice. Then he walked stiffly away.

The beginning of the ending

"You take what has happened to poor old Smokehouse Billingsley," I often said in those dark days, even to my wife. "A thing like that has to run its course." Then, when for a time it didn't and Billingsley became more cultured and more active in committees and movements, you can imagine the sort of thing my wife would say to me. Well, she did.

Until, that is, the fateful day came — a Tuesday it was, in September. It dawned bright and clear — a blue bird day, as we hunters say, the kind when a man would be lucky to scratch out a limit of anything but possibly teal or white-wing doves.

Billingsley had a terrific schedule that day, and I have that straight from the horse's mouth. I don't mean Mrs. Billingsley; I got it from Reuben, our yardman, whose wife is the Billingsley cook's own aunt, and in the same way I also got the full story on just what actually happened that historic day.

Billingsley's schedule was to begin at ten in his office and it included a meeting with a group of civic-minded citizens from the north side who were forming a committee to get something done about a red-light district that had developed there, right under their noses. They had naturally called Billingsley as a specialist — not in red-light districts now; in getting something done about things.

At noon he was to speak to a newly formed organization in town that was in favor of organizing a local foreign policy committee, and I learned by the grapevine that the plans were all laid beforehand to make him chairman of the thing.

That afternoon was filled too. It was a Tuesday, incidentally, but no matter; his golf clubs had been moldering in the bag for many months now. Billingsley was due to go right after lunch to the airport to head the welcoming committee of the Chamber of Commerce, which was to greet a committee from the state legislature. They were coming from the state capital to inspect the model municipal park system. (Remember? This was where Billingsley came in.)

Later on, at four or possibly a quarter after, the program committee of the Bar Association was meeting to lay plans for honoring the Chief Justice of the state (Knobby Eldridge, who played his earlier part in Billingsley's decline). Billingsley, while not chairman, was vice chairman and required to act since the chairman was away on a hunt.

That night was the night of the big banquet and

annual meeting of the Symphony Society, and as co-chairman of the annual campaign for funds, Billingsley was scheduled to announce that the drive had been "a thumping success."

Now when the particular Tuesday to which I refer dawned — as I have said, a blue bird day in September — something snapped somewhere. I mean something had to give somewhere; and when it did, it gave all the way. For that was the day Billingsley did not get out of bed all day. It was not that he was unwell, as the earlier rumors had it; not at all. "Never felt better in my life," he'd said to Mrs. Billingsley, according to my solid source, Reuben the yardman. "But I just don't think I'll get up today."

"But, Richard, what about the committees?" she asked, about eight-thirty, after she'd served his breakfast to him in bed and brought him the morning paper.

"Tell 'em I'm not coming today. Tell 'em to eat cake. Tell 'em to go to hell," Billingsley said; then he turned over and went back to sleep. The reason Mrs. Billingsley suspected the jig was up was that the words were spoken in the same coarse, raucous Billingsley voice of old, and accompanied by a vulgar and unstuffy chuckle.

As the day wore on, Billingsley's secretary and several co-members of various committees tried to make excuses of one kind or another, and in the forenoon Mrs. Billingsley engaged in some lame explanations herself — but with a very faint heart.

Billingsley had had his committees; that was all. He'd developed committee indigestion. He was through. The way I knew it for sure was by the telephone call I had from him about seven that evening. "This is Smokehouse," he said, and the coarse revolting quality of his old voice came across the instrument with high fidelity.

"Where the hell have you been?" I asked.

"In a gilded cage," he said. "Let's us take in a ball game tonight."

"I was going," I told him — taking things pretty easy, if you ask me, after being hung up on several times for calling him Smokehouse.

"Got a spare ticket? I gave up my box, you know," Billingsley said.

"Afraid not."

"Who's going with you?"

"Only my wife. Maybe —"

"I'll be by in a few minutes. I'll bring Cynthia along to keep her company while we're at the game. Get yourself ready."

It was the old Billingsley, all right. I could doubt it no more when I heard the abuse he heaped on the head of the poor umpire that night. The latter, having missed Billingsley's scolding reproaches for several years, actually came over at the end of the game and thanked Billingsley for the notice he'd received from the long-missing voice. He'd thought Billingsley was dead, he explained.



An Atlantic Story



NATHANIEL LAMAR, who was born in Atlanta, Georgia, twenty-two years ago, prepared for Harvard at Phillips Exeter. He majored in English and found particular stimulus for his writing in the courses which he took under Archibald MacLeish. Mr. LaMar's first story in the Atlantic, "Creole Love Song," won the Dana Reed Award at Harvard and was reprinted in *The Best American Stories*, 1956. Last autumn he began to work on his first novel; and to assist in its completion, we have awarded him an Atlantic Grant in Fiction.

MISS CARLO

by NATHANIEL LAMAR

EUDORA OWNS a dress shop, and the amazing thing is that she bought it when she was only twenty-three years old. She made the down payment with a little money that her father left when he died, and she has been in business thirty-two years. The smartest people in town get Eudora to do their dresses, because everybody says she can make any woman beautiful. Recently, for instance, she made a brocaded wedding dress for an ugly bride, and when the wedding day finally came the bride was as lovely as a mild snowstorm coming down the church aisle. These are facts.

The rest is like trying to estimate the price of some fantastic antique: everything depends on supposition. It seems that Eudora is lonely. For instance, when you see her you have the feeling that once there was a sudden flash of blue-and-white lightning, and life went running past Eudora as a strange child runs past you on the street. She is an old maid now, and her eyebrows are deadly: they stretch across her forehead like the wings of a bird. And her neck is too long. The dresses she makes for herself are incredibly ugly, the shapes and colors of fallen leaves. She wants, more than anything, to change her hairdo. She wants, more than anything, to buy a hat with long plumes and a veil; but she does not do these things, and there is a reason. There is something unmentionable and unthought-of. There are underlying things that nobody knows.

This morning these things do not matter though, because Eudora is on her way across town. She is taking a dress to Miss Carlo, who has peculiar tastes and peculiar habits. Eudora has known Miss Carlo for almost twenty years. She lives in a

broken-down apartment house although she is said to be quite wealthy. Miss Carlo *must* be wealthy because she is not a prostitute, yet she only does those things that give her pleasure. It is also rumored that she invites all sorts of queer people to her apartment: artistic types who enjoy her hospitality and amuse her in the evenings. Eudora is not sure if this is true because in all her years of sewing for Miss Carlo she has never seen or met any such people.

Miss Carlo is very kind to Eudora. For instance, when they have finished a fitting she makes Eudora take a glass of wine. Somehow she has discovered that jazz music is Eudora's secret love, which makes her almost a soothsayer, because jazz is something Eudora never mentions, never even hints about. Her father, who was a Baptist preacher and died of heart failure, thought that kind of music was too sensual and suggestive. But Miss Carlo always brings out her Graphophone and plays jazz records while Eudora sips the wine.

Miss Carlo has been South and has heard the best jazz in the world. She tells Eudora about beautiful Negro men who twirl gold watch-chains and wear false teeth made from pearls. "Fantastic," begins Miss Carlo, and as she talks her voice gets dimmer and dimmer. She moves closer and closer to you, and for a minute you believe that she is ready to lead you into some kind of hidden world where certain things remain: the things that rightfully belong to you, memories of the experiences you never even had. But you never quite get there; you have been tricked and you blame Miss Carlo for leading you on. You wonder if she is a sorceress. "I was in a certain night club in the South," says

Miss Carlo, "and there was this boy. Every time he started playing his saxophone a bulge came out on each side of his neck. A bulge as big as a goose's egg." She stops talking and touches your neck with her cool finger. "Here. Just here on the neck," she repeats. "I thought he might blow his lungs out of his body any minute." When she talks like this you have the feeling she might be able to write poetry if she tried, but if you reflect you realize that what she says isn't really poetic at all. Still, there is something about her. . . .

She is very beautiful, although she must be almost Eudora's age. Her eyes are lavender, and she seems to know all about loneliness, but this may be just a false impression. She certainly never discusses loneliness. You wonder where she keeps the photographs of various men who have loved her. But Miss Carlo never mentions, never even gives a hint. She always talks about trivial things like flower bulbs and fabrics for dresses. Yet Miss Carlo causes trivia to come to life. She creates the present tense. She talks so beautifully that sometimes, when Eudora is down on her knees draping cloth around Miss Carlo's hips, Eudora wants to say, "Would you let me get to know you? Would you, please?" But then Eudora decides, "No, the time's not ripe. Next time I'll say it." The difficulty is this thought: "next time" never comes. Miss Carlo seems so far away. You feel that she would melt with sympathy if you cut your finger. And you want her sympathy. You want any little scraps of feeling she's willing to spare. Yet you don't *dare* cut your finger.

2

AT THIS minute Eudora is walking along with Miss Carlo's new ball gown in a silver pasteboard box. The morning is hot and misty, and it is almost eleven o'clock. Eudora has left a sign saying "Closed" on the door of her shop. The shades at the windows are drawn, and the shop is full of green darkness. If you are watching Eudora at this moment you wonder where are the important things. They are gone. They are obviously missing. Has Eudora hidden them? Not exactly. They are not in her mind, and they are not in her heart.

Eudora is thinking about Miss Carlo now. "What are you doing now? What will you be wearing, Miss Carlo? The chintz dress? I hope the chintz dress." The chintz is a heavy cotton with big blue flowers on a white background. It is the dress that Miss Carlo brought back from that Caribbean cruise she took last winter. It suggests nothing more, nothing less, than love. LOVE, and Miss Carlo puts on her gold hoop earrings when she wears it. They are frightening earrings, but they are also the most beautiful things Eudora has ever seen. They are so big and heavy! The lobes of Miss Carlo's ears have been pierced especially so

that she can wear them: the gold hoops pass right through the flesh. This is the part that frightens Eudora. It causes her to imagine Miss Carlo with bleeding ears. "My friend! Oh, my friend!" Eudora says these little words wildly, between her teeth, but it is slightly ridiculous because, after all, Miss Carlo is not her friend. Not really.

She has just arrived at Miss Carlo's apartment now. "She's so pale. I want to tell her to use more rouge," thinks Eudora. "When I get to know her better, I'll tell her." She has just rung the little bell at the front door—and who is this young man? He stands in the doorway. He does not even ask Eudora to come in.

"I'm Miss Eudora. I'm Eudora, and I've brought her dress." Why does she speak so softly? Is it because he reminds her of some man she once knew?

"Would you please come in?" he says finally. But he seems so nervous. Who is he? He has heavy eyelids and long eyelashes. The strangest thing about him is that his hair is prematurely gray. It comes down into a widow's peak on the forehead.

Eudora has never seen the tall girl before, either. The girl who is sitting over there on Miss Carlo's little love seat. "I only have one good dress," she is saying to an old man with white hair. "It has red sequins at the neck. I can't wear that."

The room is full of flowers, and the windows have not been opened today. Miss Carlo has not appeared. Miss Carlo has obviously had a bang-up all-night party, which explains why there are so many drooping flowers. There are roses. There are gardenias. There are snapdragons. And on the baby grand piano is a row of empty wine bottles. The disorder is almost fantastic. Eudora has never seen Miss Carlo's apartment in such a condition. Plates of half-eaten ham and chicken on the floor.

But in a moment everything will be all right. In a moment Miss Carlo will come into this room. She will come from her bedroom, where she is probably freshening up. Or she will come out of the little room over there. That door is ajar: she is in there, where she keeps all her books. She reads incessantly—nothing but novels in foreign tongues. She will be wearing the chintz dress with gold rings through her ears. In a moment you will hear the clicking of amber bracelets, and the swish of crinolines under her wide Caribbean skirt.

But in the meantime look at these three strangers. They are such queer arty types, yet Eudora is not completely surprised. It has long been rumored that Miss Carlo keeps such people near her for recreation and amusement.

The old man calls himself Bird. His white hair is like corn silk, and he is unwashed. The room is full of his smell: the gamy odor of a handsome pheasant. Berries and feathers. The only well-groomed and immaculate thing about Bird is his white beard, which is slender and silky. There is

something about him that makes Eudora think of her dead father, except that her dead father was a devout minister and always denied passion of any kind. It is obvious that old Bird here would never deny passion. If you look at him long enough you can imagine him as a young man, kissing women on summer evenings. He is almost eighty years old and still lecherous. When Eudora walked into this room he saw all her potentialities immediately, then gave her a lecherous wink. It was the first time Eudora had been winked at since the young assistant preacher, the one who was her father's helper in the Baptist Church. . . . But this is an unfinished thought. It is one of the important things which have not been alive for years. It is not in Eudora's mind nor in her heart. She simply does not remember.

But if you should ask Bird he could remember. He can tell you about the most important relationships in his life. His account begins and ends with Miss Carlo. He is a piano tuner, and one day he came here to tune Miss Carlo's baby grand. The first time he saw her she was wearing a white dress with big blue flowers in it. It was obvious that she was vain and conceited. Who but a vain woman or a whore would wear such gold hoops in her ears? Who but a vain woman or a whore would wear purple eye-shadow?

"I want you to do a good job for me, because I'm writing a sonata," she said, obviously proud to be composing a sonata. "If I hear aftersounds in the strings I get distracted. If I hear even the tiniest aftersound in the strings I won't be able to go on."

Old Bird worked hard at tuning that baby grand. He put it into tiptop condition, and then Miss Carlo sat down and played a few dramatic bars of music, which, when you think about it, were not dramatic after all. It was just the mood and the expectation.

"I have trouble finishing my sonata," said Miss Carlo.

And after that Bird began to come here often, just to talk to her. Of course while he was here he always found time to tighten the strings of the piano a little, to eliminate any discords. Miss Carlo never allowed him to come in the mornings, because that was when she was supposed to work on her sonata, but he was welcome in the evenings, when she found it inspiring to light tall candles and sip wine. He talked to her about his secret ambitions, his most unmentionable aspirations, because she had such a power of attentiveness. He could bury his secrets in her, so to speak.

3

It is her way of listening that attracts everyone. Her manner of listening is the most seductive thing you have ever seen. She sits close beside you, and as you talk she seems to see it all: everything. You

feel that you have struck an important chord in her sonata, because suddenly her eyes flicker with tears. "Yes. I know. I know. I know," she croons.

But one day, just recently, Miss Carlo threw up her hands in desperation while old Bird was confiding in her. "Bird," she said, "I don't want to hear any more. All you do is talk about it. You never do the things you say you're going to do. You never *achieve* anything, and your old lady" — meaning Bird's wife, who is flat on her back from a paralytic stroke — "thinks we're having an affair. Please leave me," she said. "I have to work on my sonata. I have to finish it." Miss Carlo sounded almost pathetic, except that it is not reasonable to think that such a beautiful and powerful woman could ever be pathetic. Consider what a strong influence she is capable of exerting.

She has greatly influenced the life of the girl Lee — Lee who was talking about a dress when Eudora came into this room. Lee inspires jealousy in every woman she meets. Her long white legs are envied. At this very moment, for instance, Eudora is watching the legs jealously. And women envy Lee's power to attract men of all ages. Eudora has only been in this room two minutes, yet already certain things begin to dawn upon her: something is going on between Lee and the boy with gray hair. Eudora suspects that they have danced close together, and she is right. They danced to jazz last night, right here in this room. It may seem incredible to anyone who has known Eudora for thirty-two years, but Eudora herself has danced, and with a young clergyman. This is beside the point though, except for the fact that certain important memories are rousing, now, like sleepy dogs.

Lee can tell you in detail about Miss Carlo's sympathy and generosity. Miss Carlo's generous impulses almost drove her crazy. Lee is a dancer, or would like to be one, and she is untalented. Perhaps that is what softened Miss Carlo's heart at first. And for months, up until last winter, Miss Carlo kept Lee by her side constantly. She paid for Lee's dancing lessons with one of the best teachers in this city, and she made it known to everybody that Lee was her hand-picked favorite. "I have taken Lee under my wing," said Miss Carlo.

Lee can tell you about a string of parties which Miss Carlo gave. There was one party in particular. Miss Carlo served fantastic drinks and all sorts of strange people came: friends past and present. There was an unfortunate alcoholic woman carrying a little hairless dog in her arms. It was rumored that Miss Carlo once supported that woman's attempts at painting. Then there was a man from New Orleans who was reputedly able to whip the life out of a piano. Supposedly he too was helped by Miss Carlo; but he discovered that his star was rising and struck out on his own. Old Bird came, and Nicolas, the boy with prematurely gray hair.

Miss Carlo's attitude took a strange turn after

Lee met Nicolas. She acquired the habit of squeezing Lee's hand, looking into her eyes, and murmuring desperate encouragement: "You have to work so hard, Lee. I almost despair for you. You have to be willing to sacrifice everything, if you want to be a good dancer." There was always so much sincerity and sadness in Miss Carlo's voice when she said these things. She always made it so painful for poor Lee, whose lovely long white legs inspire jealousy in every woman. Lee does not know, not even to this day, whether Miss Carlo realized what was going on between her and Nicolas. But she remembers Miss Carlo's words. The things Miss Carlo said last winter just before the happening occurred between Miss Carlo and Nicolas: "Lee, have you ever thought how weak that boy Nicolas is? I'm afraid for him."

It is really Nicolas who knows Miss Carlo best. For instance, last night when they wanted to light the candles he knew where to find the matches, without Miss Carlo's help. And when wine was wanted, he knew where to look for the wineglasses, again without Miss Carlo's help. He has always yielded to Miss Carlo's will, and that has been the root of his trouble. At least that is what the doctors decided last winter.

Nicolas was unable to resist her, even on the day he met her. She came to the university in the afternoons to take a course in the appreciation of literature. That was at a time when Nicolas was studying very hard. She was wearing a little hat covered with silver feathers the first time he saw her. Boys lying under trees reading dropped their books to look at her as she went by. On first impression Miss Carlo is everything any man could wish for: she is a mother, a bedmate, and a nun. Her ankles are delicate, and she wears shoes with very high heels. Nicolas would swear to you, at this very minute, that Miss Carlo is not the kind of woman who would ever stoop to jealousy. He will tell you that she has always been above such petty emotions.

He first saw Lee at one of Miss Carlo's evening parties. "Have you ever written a poem?" asked Miss Carlo, but Nicolas was watching Lee across the room. "When you lie in the bed at night you can feel a poem above your head in the dark. If you can write down the important things —" Miss Carlo's voice began to trail off into a croon, "the things you forget because they're too good to remember —" And all the while Nicolas was looking at Lee. He thought he was inspired by Lee. He did not realize that, after all, it was Miss Carlo. "Do you know that girl very well?" he asked.

"I *do* know her well," said Miss Carlo. "I'm trying to help her. She's unfortunate. She's untalented. But what about poems?" That was Miss Carlo's clever way of changing the subject.

Before you realize it Miss Carlo is likely to overshadow everything else. It is necessary to be careful. Eudora can tell you how dangerous it is if

once you admit Miss Carlo into your imagination. Everything in you begins to die slowly, because Miss Carlo remains only a potentiality forever. Eudora, on the basis of twenty years' acquaintance, can tell you just how true this is.

Miss Carlo became like a mother to Nicolas. She also became his nurse and his nun; everything in the world except a poem. And yet she has refused, to this day, to say positively whether or not she loved him. She had a way of tempting him, a way of running her cool hand over his cheek, a way of saying, "That girl Lee hinders you. You're talented. You're inspired." But never once did she say she loved him. Miss Carlo dallied with love; she trifled with it. That has been the root of Nicolas' sadness. That is what sent him to a mental hospital last winter while Miss Carlo took a Caribbean cruise and enjoyed the tropical flowers.

That is also what makes these three people — these three arty types — so quiet and strange this very minute. Eudora thinks she will absolutely die of nerves unless she can make at least a word or two of conversation. She has been here five minutes, and Miss Carlo has not appeared yet.

"If Miss Carlo is too busy to see me this morning —" says Eudora timidly, "I'll —"

"She died. Miss Carlo died," replies Nicolas. "I was trying to think how to tell you," he says, and there are other things he wants to say. He looks as if he is going to burst into tears any minute.

"She had to be rushed to the hospital day before yesterday," says Lee. "And her cousin — her only living relative — refused to come. So we're giving her her funeral this afternoon." This peculiar girl is smiling.

"But I've brought her *dress*. The *dress*, don't you see?" Poor Eudora. "I promised her last week that I'd fit it. For the ball. You *know* there's a ball!"

"We sat up all night long," says old Bird. "We were the only ones." He knows it will not be long before he will "sit up all night long" with his wife, who is now flat on her back from a paralytic stroke.

"Did Miss Carlo die of — did she have heart failure?"

"No. An infection. Do you remember, last winter she had her ears pierced —?"

"She was going to the ball with me," says Nicolas.

"We know," mumbles Bird. "We all know. So what's the use of talking about it?" And he chuckles. But Eudora does not know. What does he mean? Eudora is still in the dark, so to speak.

"Do you want to see her, Eudora?"

"She's in there, Eudora. In that room, Eudora."

"Will you stay with us, Eudora, for her funeral?"

Eudora. Eudora. It is strange: to look at her at this minute, to hear them calling her by her Christian name, you would think she had known these people twenty years or more. It is not only strange, it is shocking and confusing, as well.



PURSUIT

by SYLVIA PLATH

Dans le fond des forêts votre image me suit. -- RACINE

THERE is a panther stalks me down:
One day I'll have my death of him;
His greed has set the woods aflame,
He prowls more lordly than the sun.
Most soft, most suavely glides that step,
Advancing always at my back;
From gaunt hemlock, rooks croak havoc:
The hunt is on, and sprung the trap.
Flayed by thorns I trek the rocks,
Haggard through the hot white noon.
Along red network of his veins
What fires run, what craving wakes?

Insatiate, he ransacks the land
Condemned by our ancestral fault,
Crying: blood, let blood be spilt;
Meat must glut his mouth's raw wound.
Keen the rending teeth and sweet
The singeing fury of his fur;
His kisses parch, each paw's a briar,
Doom consummates that appetite.
In the wake of this fierce cat,
Kindled like torches for his joy,
Charred and ravened women lie,
Become his starving body's bait.

Now hills hatch menace, spawning shade;
Midnight cloaks the sultry grove;
The black marauder, hauled by love
On fluent haunches, keeps my speed.
Behind snarled thickets of my eyes
Lurks the lithe one; in dreams' ambush
Bright those claws that mar the flesh
And hungry, hungry, those taut thighs.
His ardor snares me, lights the trees,
And I run flaring in my skin;
What lull, what cool can lap me in
When burns and brands that yellow gaze?

I hurl my heart to halt his pace,
To quench his thirst I squander blood;
He eats, and still his need seeks food,
Compels a total sacrifice.
His voice waylays me, spells a trance,
The gutted forest falls to ash;
Appalled by secret want, I rush
From such assault of radiance.
Entering the tower of my fears,
I shut my doors on that dark guilt,
I bolt the door, each door I bolt.
Blood quickens, gonging in my ears:

The panther's tread is on the stairs,
Coming up and up the stairs.



A New Yorker educated at Harvard University, ERNEST GRUENING spent twenty years in the field of journalism, first as a reporter and later as managing editor successively of the New York Tribune, The Nation magazine, and the New York Evening Post. Following that he served for five years as the first Director of the Division of Territories and Island Possessions, and in 1939 President Roosevelt appointed him Governor of Alaska. There for thirteen years he worked tirelessly in office, visiting many remote villages and gradually earning the respect and liking of the Alaska citizens. His book, The State of Alaska, was published in 1954, and now in the pages that follow he shows how long and for what causes we have neglected this valuable territory.

ALASKA FIGHTS FOR STATEHOOD

by ERNEST GRUENING

1

NINETY years ago, in the Treaty of Cession by which we bought Alaska from Russia, the United States pledged that "the inhabitants of the ceded territory . . . shall be admitted to the enjoyment of all the rights, advantages and immunities of citizens of the United States."

The United States has not carried out that pledge. Alaskans, having unceasingly sought its fulfillment, or a substantial portion thereof, during the nine decades under the American flag, are now resorting to a procedure which was last invoked nearly a century ago. They are sending to Washington two Senators and one Representative, elected by Alaskans last October, to seek admission to the Congress.

The event will not be unprecedented in American history. In the past, five areas destined to become states of the Union have, in advance of action by the Congress admitting them to statehood, elected their Senators and Representatives and sent them to the national capital to request admission. Tennessee began it in 1796, followed by Michigan in 1835, by California — which had not even been granted territorial status — in 1849, by Oregon in 1858, and by Kansas in the years preceding its admission in 1861. In all five instances this tactic was, after varying intervals of time, successful. In every case it hastened the coming of statehood.

Alaska's history has been one of neglect by a distant and uninterested federal government. Worse, it has been a history of continuing discrimination which makes Alaska today a flagrant example of colonialism. In the first seventeen years after the purchase Congress passed only two laws relating to Alaska. One extended the commerce and navigation laws and made Alaska a customs district. The other turned over the fur-seal fisheries

of Alaska's Pribilof Islands to the Secretary of the Treasury, who leased them as a monopoly to a private concern in San Francisco.

While four presidential administrations and eight Congresses came and went, it was not possible in Alaska for a hopeful settler to acquire title to a square foot of land. No pioneer could clear a bit of the forested wilderness and count on the fruits of his labor, or build a log cabin with the assurance that it was his. No prospector could stake a mining claim with security for his enterprise. Property could not be deeded or transferred; the lovelorn could not marry; no injured party could secure redress except by his own acts; crime could not be punished. This period — unique for any area under the American flag — has become known in Alaska as the "era of no government."

Such authority as existed was exercised, without legal warrant, by the commanding officer of the troops stationed at Sitka. And when, in 1877, he and his troops were removed from Alaska to put down an uprising of the Nez Percé Indians in Idaho, there remained not even a semblance of government. Fearful of a similar uprising in Alaska, the white settlers appealed to their government in Washington for the dispatch of a gunboat to maintain order. When the federal authorities ignored repeated requests, the frontiersmen appealed to their neighbors, the Canadians, who complied. For months one of Her Majesty's men-o'-war performed the function that it was the duty and obligation of a United States warship to perform. The incident was prophetic of eighty years of subsequent federal indifference to the Alaskans' welfare. When an American cruiser ultimately arrived, the commander of that vessel, and his

successors for four years, acted as Alaska's chief executive, with no legal warrant whatever.

Finally, in 1884, Congress decided to give Alaska a form of government, and adopted an Organic Act. It proved almost worthless. Application of land laws was specifically forbidden, thus preventing settlement. Grand and petit juries were not legally possible under it. The position of governor, a presidential appointee, was created, but he was given little authority and no means with which to function. Establishment of a legislature was denied. For the next fourteen years the reports and messages of five successive governors were urgent pleas to enact some body of workable law for Alaska. All in vain.

But in the late nineties Congress was roused from its thirty-year lethargy in regard to Alaska by the discovery of gold in the Klondike. When 60,000 Americans rushed northward and found no law to satisfy their needs, they began writing to their Senators and Representatives, and because they were still constituents — and therefore voters — their caustic letters brought action.

However, the new legislation, enacted at a distance of 5000 miles by men who had no firsthand knowledge of Alaska, proved largely inappropriate and unworkable. So there arose a demand for someone who could speak officially for Alaska, a voteless delegate, such as every other territory had had from its beginnings. But four Congresses debated this modest proposal without action. Not until 1906 was that office established.

Invariably in Alaska's annals, such minor concessions as it has received from its federal overlords have been "too little and too late." Before long Alaska's 60,000 inhabitants, a population doubled by the gold rush, felt that some form of self-government was long overdue. Their demand for a legislature, such as every other territory had had from its birth, was finally granted in 1912. It had taken forty-five years to accord Alaska the minimum of home rule to which every American community is entitled.

The Organic Act of 1912, although a substantial improvement over its unworkable predecessor — the Act of 1884 — was still notable for the things it *forbade* Alaskans to do. The Alaska legislature was forbidden to enact any basic land laws — a lamentable omission in an area one fifth as large as the United States, consisting of large areas of public domain and crying for settlement. At the behest of the powerful canned-salmon lobby which has always fought and continues to fight every increase in Alaskan autonomy, the management of Alaska's natural resources, the fisheries and wildlife, was kept under federal control — a withholding not visited on any other American territory. Congress likewise retained control of the judiciary. Alaska's lower-court judges, however, were not to be paid a salary, but were compelled to subsist on the fees

they could collect from the Alaskan people — a source of revenue insufficient for all but five or six of these fifty-odd federal judicial officials. Alaskans were forbidden to create counties. There were numerous other prohibitions. In fact it was a far more restrictive Act than had been granted any other territory, including the Act given twelve years earlier to the newly annexed Territory of Hawaii.

2

WHEN the first legislature assembled in 1913 and found vast fields into which it was forbidden to tread, it memorialized Congress to enact obviously required legislation. It asked for revision of the land laws — laws adopted for the states half a century earlier and not suited to Alaska, and therefore impeding settlement. It asked for federal highway construction — an appropriate request in a region over 99.9 per cent public domain. It asked for an end to reservations and withdrawals which further impeded entry and settlement. It asked for action looking toward reasonable transportation rates. It requested that the lower-court judges — the United States Commissioners — be paid a salary. It requested transfer of the management of the fisheries to Alaska.

Over forty years later, not one of these requests, all reasonable, proper, essential to Alaska's development, repeated by successive legislatures, and obtainable only through congressional action, had been granted.

But there was worse to come. New discriminations, which intensified Alaska's colonial status, were to be imposed by the federal authorities. The federal income tax, passed in 1913, included Alaska though it excluded Puerto Rico, which in addition received in its treasury all the excise taxes and customs receipts collected by the federal government. Alaskans neither sought nor wanted such favor, but they were shocked when they found that Alaska was excluded from the federal aid highway legislation enacted in 1916.

This highly important and beneficent legislation coincided with the development of the automobile and the consequent necessity to create a new, nation-wide transportation network. The Congress correctly foresaw that there would have to be a national system of highways of a uniform and reasonably high standard, and that this could be accomplished only by joint federal and state enterprise. So, by authority of the new Act, the federal government began appropriating vast sums to match funds provided by the states — no state receiving less than 50 per cent matching. But the western states, in which a varying proportion of land remains public domain, and therefore unavailable for tax revenue, receive a larger proportion of federal funds, based on a complex formula in which area, extent of public domain, population, and

existing highway mileage play a part. Alaska — alone among the states and territories — was excluded.

As a result Alaska, compelled to rely on its own revenues and parsimonious annual federal appropriations, has only a negligible road mileage. Virtually the only highway construction it has secured through the federal government has been that required for military purposes.

The discrimination in federal highway legislation has been further increased, currently, by Alaska's exclusion from the mammoth superhighway bill sponsored by President Eisenhower during the 83rd Congress and revised and brought out in a different form in the 84th. There was a conflict of opinion between the President and Congress as to the method of financing: the President urged long-term bonding; the Congress preferred "pay as you go," through higher taxes on gasoline, tires, trucks, and trailers. But in one respect executive and legislative branches agreed: while Alaska was to be excluded from participation in this measure's benefits, it was to be included in the taxation. Thus every Alaskan will pay his share of the multibillion-dollar program for the benefit of all the states from Alabama to Wyoming, every time he stops for gas or buys a truck or a new tire.

Toward the close of the 84th Congress Alaska was finally included, *but on a reduced and discriminatory basis, and only in a part of the federal aid highway legislation*. An amendment by Senator Richard Neuberger of Oregon proposed that Alaska be included henceforth, but that in calculating Alaska's quota of federal funds only half of Alaska's area be counted. In return for this reduction — not applicable to any state or to Hawaii or Puerto Rico — Alaska would be allowed to use federal and its own matching funds for road maintenance as well as construction, a reasonable arrangement. But on motion of Senator Francis Case of South Dakota, Alaska suffered a further reduction, its share to be based on only one third of its area. That was the best deal obtainable for Alaska.

Small wonder that the comment forty years ago of Judge James Wickersham, one of Alaska's earlier delegates, is still pertinent: "Alaska is only a redheaded stepchild in the national family, and the other children covet its estate and take it."

The Congress imposed a similar exclusion on Alaska in maritime transportation four years after the initial exclusion of the territory from the Federal Aid Highway Act.

The Maritime Act of 1920, known in Alaska as the Jones Act, after its sponsor, the late Senator Wesley L. Jones of Seattle, Washington, provided a unique discrimination by the insertion of the words "excluding Alaska." Under that law, all areas, foreign and domestic, were permitted to use interchangeably American or foreign rail or marine carriers to transport freight across the country and beyond. Alaska, however, was forced to use

the rail and shipping services in and out of Seattle only, and denied the more convenient and far less costly use of nearer Canadian ports. In consequence a number of budding industries in Alaska were put out of business, and their re-establishment or the creation of others has been foreclosed ever since.

The Alaska legislators deemed this discrimination violative of the commerce clause of the Constitution, which specifically forbids giving preference to one port over another. Therefore, when they assembled in 1921 for their fifth biennial session, they ordered the territorial Attorney General to take the issue to court. The Supreme Court, before which it finally came, declared that the action of Congress regarding Alaska in the Maritime Act of 1920 was clearly discriminatory, but that the Court could discover no prohibition in the Constitution of discrimination against a territory, and that the fathers, in drawing up the Constitution, did not visualize extension of its provisions "to the ports of entry of colonial dependencies."

So the highest court of the land, the ultimate dispenser of "equal justice under law," ruled that it is proper and legal to discriminate against a territory! And the Court's language affirmed Alaska's colonial status.

In that respect the Court was at least realistic. The Jones Act and its accompaniments of federal bureaucratic action have burdened all Alaskans with the highest freight rates in the world. Putting the entire population of a dependent area at an economic disadvantage for the profit of privileged groups in the "mother country," which are able through their superior political power to have special benefits enacted into law — this is the quintessence of colonialism. The United States is guilty of it on many counts in Alaska.

3

FOR the last third of a century every Alaskan delegate has sought to rectify these discriminatory injustices. In virtually every Congress the delegate has introduced bills 1) to include Alaska in federal aid highway legislation; 2) to abolish the discriminatory language in the Jones Act; 3) to reform the land laws for Alaska to suit them to its needs; 4) to pay the lower-court judges a salary; 5) to transfer the management of the fisheries to the territory. Every one of these efforts, unremittingly sought for nearly two generations, has failed, except as above noted.

The federal land laws still make settlement of Alaska extremely difficult. Despite the protests of Alaskans, federal reservations and withdrawals total nearly a hundred million acres, an area larger than the state of Montana. Yet members of Congress opposing statehood have in debate reproached Alaskans for their "failure" to transfer more public land to private ownership.

Administration of justice, the cornerstone of a free society, continues to suffer gravely in Alaska. The lower-court judges are still unsalaried; the discredited fee system provides only one tenth of the judges a living wage. In the states the number of federal judges has been increased steadily to keep pace with population growth. But in Alaska the number of judges — and federal judges being the only judges that colony is permitted to have, their duties are more extensive than those of federal judges in the states — remains the same as it was fifty-eight years ago when the population was less than a third its present size. Every attempt to get Congress to give Alaska even one additional judge has failed.

Under the joint control of a politically potent absentee industry and a federal bureau which the industry dominates, instead of being regulated by it, Alaska's greatest natural resource, and once the nation's greatest fishery resource, the Pacific salmon, is being destroyed. The Alaska salmon runs reached in 1955 the lowest point in nearly half a century, although there was a slight upturn in 1956. President Eisenhower for three successive years has had to proclaim Alaska's fishing communities disaster areas.

In neighboring British Columbia and in the states of Washington and Oregon the salmon industry is thriving and growing, despite the handicaps of power dams, pulp and paper mills, the sewage of large communities, and other accompaniments of modern industrial development which Alaska lacks, thereby illustrating the superiority of home management which Congress persists in not according Alaska.

Thus "a long train of abuses and usurpations" of their promised rights as Americans has led Alaskans to conclude that only statehood — and the equality it would bring — will satisfy their needs, end the injustices which they suffer, and validate the unfulfilled pledge of the Treaty of Cession to admit them to "all the rights, advantages and immunities of citizens of the United States."

Those rights, advantages, and immunities would entitle them to vote for President and Vice President, which they cannot now do; to representation in the Congress by two Senators and a Representative, whom they do not now have; and to immunity from the legalized disadvantages outlined above.

The major party platforms have pledged statehood to Alaska — the Democratic in 1948 and both the Democratic and the Republican in 1952 and 1956. General Dwight D. Eisenhower, in a ringing public address in Denver in 1950, declared: "Quick admission of Alaska and Hawaii to statehood will show the world that America practices what it preaches." But after taking the presidential office, he dropped espousal of Alaskan statehood and urged statehood for Hawaii only. This reversal Alaskans

attribute to President Eisenhower's close friend and trusted adviser, General Lucius D. Clay, chairman of the board of the Continental Can Company, one of whose principal customers is the Alaska canned-salmon industry.

In contrast to governmental opposition, public opinion in the United States overwhelmingly supports statehood for Alaska.

The failure of Congress and the President to act, not merely on statehood but on a variety of lesser measures, has led the people of Alaska to the point where, after ninety years of neglect, discrimination, and violation of platform pledges and of treaty commitments, they believe that patience has ceased to be a virtue. They know that they have long since demonstrated their readiness for statehood — that every congressional committee which has studied the question through extensive hearings has returned a favorable report. They point out that Alaska's population of 209,000 is greater than was that of two thirds of the thirty-five states of the Union admitted after the original thirteen, at the time of their admission. Of this Alaskan population six sevenths originated in the forty-eight states — men and women of pioneer instincts who, following the oldest American tradition, moved westward in search of greater freedom and opportunity. The remaining one seventh, descendants of the aboriginal population, are no less worthy, no less capable of assuming the responsibilities of full citizenship.

Alaskans feel in their hearts that what progress they have made in Alaska — and it has been substantial — has been made in spite of the federal impositions and largely because of the fiber and character of their fellow Alaskans, who brought to "the last frontier" the very qualities that have made America. They have now determined to do everything in their power to secure the validation of the most basic of American principles, that of government by consent of the governed.

Alaska's Americans deeply feel that the great destiny of Alaska is to be not merely a bulwark of defense for the Western Hemisphere, but also — and perhaps even more important — a citadel of the American idea, a firm outpost of democracy most befittingly located in those distant northern latitudes once under Russian rule, and now within naked-eye view of the totalitarian tyranny of the Soviet police state. But they are no less deeply convinced that this challenging objective, to make Alaska a shining example of all that is best and attainable in our free society, can never be achieved while Alaska remains a colony. Moreover, they firmly believe that America's leadership in the interest of peace is gravely jeopardized by the contrast between preachment and practice, and that the national interest will be served by validation through deeds of American principles and professions — specifically by the prompt admission of Alaska as a state of the Union.



*Mr. Justice Holmes, John Adams, and Sir Edward Coke — to the study of these three giants in law CATHERINE DRINKER BOWEN has devoted no less than fifteen years. The sequence is important, for each of the three built upon the edifice of his predecessor; and for this reason perhaps Sir Edward Coke, who suppressed the conspiracies against Queen Elizabeth and fought for the Commons against James I and Charles I — perhaps he is the mightiest of the trio in that he laid the foundations of our Bill of Rights. The following excerpt, which shows Sir Edward — now Chief Justice Coke — in his historic role of champion of the common law against King James's abuse of the royal prerogative, is the third drawn from Mrs. Bowen's new book, *The Lion and the Throne*. These excerpts are highlights in a volume which in its entirety runs to 200,000 words.*

THE LION AND THE THRONE

The Law Is the Safest Shield

by CATHERINE DRINKER BOWEN

I

MICHAELMAS term opened in October; the great doors of Westminster Hall let in their heterogeneous stream. Chief Justice Coke sat behind the bar of Common Pleas, receiving cases in their turn. After twelve years as Attorney General, Coke, in the summer of 1606, had been raised by King James to the bench. No longer plain black-gowned Sir Edward, *my Lord Coke* sat now in scarlet silk, on his head the coveted white coif of judgeship.

Only three steps from courtroom floor to bench, yet Coke became, almost overnight, another man. "The most offensive of Attorney Generals," wrote Francis Bacon's biographer, "transformed into the most admired and venerated of Judges." When advocates turn judge, the world expects them to be worthy the occasion; the Bench would seem to lift the spirit as well as the body of a lawyer. But with Coke the breach is not merely noticeable, it is startling, and from a distance of centuries, hard at first to credit. A sharp road cuts between the countries of this life. Attorney General Coke, sharp driving tool of Crown authority, put on the robes of judgeship and became to all appearances the champion of another cause. "There is a maxim," he told the Lower House: "*The common law hath admeasured the King's prerogative*. It is not I, Edward Coke, that speaks it but the records that speak it."

"The King," he advised James, "cannot take any cause out of any of his courts and give judgment upon it himself."

"No person," he wrote in the *Second Institute*,

"ought in any ecclesiastical court to be examined upon the cogitation of his heart or what he thinketh."

Such pronouncements, had they come from England's Attorney General, would have been near to treason; as Elizabeth's servant Coke could hardly have shaped the words; his mind was turned another way. But spoken by Chief Justice Coke the words were to come as natural evolvement, behind them the long affirmation of Coke's years as scholar, judge, and Commons man. Times had changed, the scene was ready. In the Attorney Generalship, Coke had held an office which, above any in government, existed (as Bacon said) to guard the prerogative; the Queen's Attorney was the Queen's watchdog. On the drafty bench of Common Pleas, Coke sat now as judge, pledged by his oath to "well and truly serve the King and his people."

Before three months were out, Chief Justice Coke attacked the very prerogative court which as Elizabeth's Attorney General he had upheld. Coke's change of direction was logical: Stuart England was not Tudor England; a man could with honesty uphold Elizabeth's prerogative and cry down James's. Not only had Elizabeth her country's welfare at heart, with skill and strength to sustain it, but the situation around her had been different. Tudor England suffered under continual threat from the Continental Catholic powers. "War-and-no-war," Raleigh had called it in 1593, begging for fighting ships against the Spaniard.

James came to the throne, and for a brief year or two the issue and the antagonists seemed to re-

main the same; in the Gunpowder trials it was Rome, Spain, a foreign enemy that Coke, as Attorney General, continued to fight. Yet by the year 1607, James had revealed himself to those with eyes to see. This good-natured prince, fond of theological disputation and the deer hunt, desired to rule England as he had ruled Scotland, above the state and above the law. Parliaments were a trial laid on recurrently, like God's plagues on Pharaoh. There were kings, James wrote blandly, "before any Parliaments were holden, or laws made" — a statement to Coke's mind as un-English as the tasseled crown of the Spanish ambassador's hat.

Squarely behind James stood Lord Chancellor Ellesmere, served by Masters in Chancery, Clerks in Chancery, and a battery of civilians learned in Roman law. At Ellesmere's side Archbishop Bancroft exercised the wide legal powers of the Anglican Established Church. "It is clear by the Word of God in the Scripture," said Bancroft, "that judges are but delegates under the King."

"Let judges remember," said Francis Bacon, "that Solomon's throne was supported by lions on both sides; let them be lions, but yet lions under the throne, being circumspect that they do not check or oppose any points of sovereignty."

Edward Coke did not agree. "The King is under God and the law!" he said.

It was high time for an authoritative definition of the word "king." Certain new-risen philosophers, said Lord Chancellor Ellesmere scornfully, looked upon the common law as above the monarch, even daring to declare that "kings have no more power than the people from whom they take their temporal jurisdiction!" Such persons called upon the *law of nature*, asking if "kings or people did first make laws."

Near treason! said Ellesmere warmly. "The monarch is the law. *Rex est lex loquens*, the king is the law speaking." King James, Ellesmere added during the hearing of Calvin's case, might well take the law in his own hands and determine the case himself. Such a statement, made officially in an English courtroom — and by the Lord Chancellor himself — was a slap in the face of Edward Coke and all who held his ideas on government. Against it the Chief Justice of Common Pleas had but one official recourse: to withdraw suits from prerogative courts whenever and however he could, narrow down the Roman law jurisdiction and starve it to bones. By siege or by assault, Coke's weapons were slight. Mere legal quibbles, some called them — as prohibitions, for instance. Yet giants still were vulnerable if pebbles could be found.

2

DURING the year following, prohibitions flowed out from Common Pleas under Coke's seal. Archbishop Bancroft was alarmed. He appealed to

James, advised him of the danger. Let his Majesty summon Coke and his brethren, tell them they overstepped.

On a November Sunday, common law judges and ecclesiastics were summoned to Whitehall. James sat in his chair, the disputants remained standing before him. Sir Julius Caesar, a Doctor of Roman Law, took notes. The King opened the meeting by remarking shortly that he had come neither to hear nor to make orations. Coke, as spokesman for the judges, this time was well prepared. Ecclesiastical courts, he said, had undoubted authority to proceed, so long as no temporal matters were involved. But let a temporal issue enter the case, and it must be transferred to the common law courts — even in causes of clearly ecclesiastical nature.

The King broke in. Common law judges, he said, were like papists who quoted Scripture and then put upon it their own interpretation, to be received unquestioned. At this point someone, probably Bancroft, brought up the touchy matter of James's own powers. The judges, he said, were but delegates of the King; his Majesty had the right to take what causes he pleased from the judges and determine them himself. To this, Coke made instant rejoinder. The sovereign might sit in Star Chamber, "and this appears in our books." But only to consult with the judges, not *in judicio*. (In Star Chamber was a chair of state, emblazoned with the royal arms. For thirty years Coke had seen it empty; Elizabeth never claimed her right to sit. There were powers a wise sovereign did not put to public test.) "And it appears by Act of Parliament," Coke went on, addressing the King, "that neither by the Great Seal nor by the Little Seal, justice shall be delayed; *ergo*, the King cannot take any cause out of any courts and give judgment upon it himself. . . ."

James broke in, told Coke he "spoke foolishly." Himself, the King, as supreme head of justice, would defend to the death his prerogative of calling judges before him to decide disputes of jurisdiction. Moreover, the King would "*ever protect the common law*."

"The common law," Coke interjected, "protecteth the King."

"A traitorous speech!" James shouted. "The King protecteth the law, and not the law the King! The King maketh Judges and Bishops. If the Judges interpret the laws themselves and suffer none else to interpret, they may easily make the laws shipmen's hose!"

At this point James shook his fist and Sir Julius Caesar, after one brief sentence, stopped taking notes. Coke's *Report* picks up the story. "Then the King said that he thought the Law was founded upon Reason, and that he and others had Reason as well as the Judges. To which it was answered by me, that true it was that God had endowed his Majesty with excellent science and great endow-

ments of Nature. But His Majesty was not learned in the Laws of his Realm of England; and Causes which concern the Life, or Inheritance, or Goods or Fortunes of his Subjects are not to be decided by natural Reason but by the artificial Reason and Judgment of Law, which requires long Study and Experience before that a man can attain to the cognizance of it; and that the Law was the golden Metwand and Measure to try Causes of the Subjects, which protected his Majesty in safety and Peace: With which the King was greatly offended, and said that then he should be under the Law, which was treason to affirm (as he said). To which I said, that Bracton saith, *Quod Rex non debet esse sub homine, sed sub Deo et Lege* — that the King should not be under man, but under God and the Laws.”

Sir Rafe Boswell described the scene in a letter to Dr. Milborne:—

“The Lord Coke humbly prayed the king to have respect to the Common Lawes of his land &c. He prayed his Majesty to consider that the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction was forren. After which his Majesty fell into that high indignation as the like was never knowne in him, looking and speaking fiercely with bended fist, offering to strike him, &c. Which the Lo. Cooke perceiving fell flatt on all fower; humbly beseeching his Majestie to take compassion on him and to pardon him if he thought zeale had gone beyond his dutie and allegiance. His Majestie not herewith contented, continued his indignation. Whereuppon the Lo. Treasurer [Robert Cecil] the Lo. Cooke’s unckle by marriage, kneeled down before his Majestie and prayed him to be favourable. To whom his Majestie replied saying, *What hast thou to doe to intreate for him?*”

It was a tremendous scene: a king’s fist raised against a judge, the small pale hunchback throwing himself between.

Very likely, Coke did fall on his face. It was that or a cell in the Tower. The Chief Justice of Common Pleas kneeled, and rose, and went out into November city streets. King James, having disposed of these vexing questions, as it seemed in one brief forenoon, turned his face again to Royston, where the red deer ran.

Next morning a new prohibition, under Coke’s seal, went out to High Commission from the Court of Common Pleas.

But it was to his own court, his own northwest corner of Westminster Hall, that Coke now carried the fight. That vast chamber, where among ceiling cobwebs the wooden angels flew, face down in faintly seen benignity — that vast chamber which Attorney General Coke had witnessed cleared and garnished for an Essex trial, a Raleigh trial — was now a working-place, busy, humdrum, matutinal. There were no screens round Common Pleas; with three law courts in session (counting Chancery), the Hall hummed like a hive. Throngs passed up and

down the middle aisle between the courts: book-sellers, stationers, scriveners, vendors of bread and hot meats. In winter Coke sat wrapped in miniver, the tabs of his velvet cap pulled down over the coif to warm his ears, his full robe tucked around his feet against the drafty floor. A mustiness lay upon this ancient place; old Ellesmere, mounting to his chair, clutched sprigs of wormwood to ward off evil vapors.

All during the winter of 1609–1610, while Parliament was sitting, Coke sent out his prohibitions, battling Archbishop Bancroft “in contempt,” wrote Bancroft angrily, “of the command of the King.” Repeatedly, Lord Chancellor Ellesmere called the judges to conference, sometimes in the King’s presence, sometimes alone. They failed to shake Sir Edward; he never changed position. Bonham’s case came to court; Coke seized occasion to declare the common law above Parliament as well as above the King: “When an Act of Parliament is against common right and reason, the common law will control it and adjudge such Act to be void.”

It was the most controversial judicial dictum of Coke’s life, and one which echoed down the centuries, interpreted according to men’s special needs. . . . 1765, and a Stamp Act passed in Parliament. New England protesting. “An Act against natural equity is void!” shouted James Otis of Massachusetts, and from Boston to Virginia trumpets blew. Massachusetts Assembly declared the Stamp Act invalid, “against Magna Charta and the natural rights of Englishmen, and therefore, according to the Lord Coke, null and void.” Patrick Henry also cited Coke as authority for nullification. But how, a doubtful judge inquired of John Adams, can such nullity be proven? By the *jus gladii divinum* — the divine right of the sword? Never mind *jus gladii*, replied John Adams at once. “Tell the jury the nullity of acts of Parliament. . . . I am determined to die of that opinion.”

Coke would have been astonished at the uses to which Bonham’s case was put. *Lex est tutissima cassis*; the law is the safest shield. Coke’s motto sounded in colonial law courts beside the name of Bonham, dead two centuries and more. . . . 1787: a federal convention to construct a United States Constitution, to create a Supreme Court of judges that would pass on legislation and interpret it.

3

MY LORD JUSTICE COKE, who had served the Crown so pliantly as Attorney General, had become, after seven years in Common Pleas, a thorn in King James’s side. In the spring of 1613, Sir Francis Bacon devised a plan to remove Coke, without trouble or scandal, by the simple expedient of kicking him upstairs. If Coke were made Chief Justice of King’s Bench, and one Henry Hobart put in Coke’s place in Common Pleas, then Bacon

could be named Attorney General — and his Majesty, wrote Sir Francis, “would speedily find a marvelous change in his business.”

Coke heard of the plan and howled his protest, urged friends to help, sent his own letter to the King. Common Pleas was where he belonged, where he was fittest to be. In Common Pleas he hoped to end his days.

It was of no use. Sir Henry Hobart stepped into Common Pleas, Bacon was sworn Attorney General. The new Chief Justice missed none of the implications of his new position. Meeting Bacon in the courts, Coke challenged him angrily. “Mr. Attorney, this is all your doing. It is you that have made this great stir!” Bacon’s reply must instantly have gone the rounds, rejoicing Coke’s enemies who had seen him wax rich in the law. “Ah, my lord!” said Bacon, “your Lordship all this while hath grown in breadth. You must needs now grow in height, or else you would be a monster!”

In such a retort, the smile, the bow ironic, are implicit. Bacon was master at the art. *The cat*, Sir Francis once had written, *knows whose lips she licks*. . . .

Lord Coke was Chief Justice of England now, and at first the change seemed propitious. Coke published his tenth *Report* that winter. The preface opened with a tranquil, happy note. Coke’s old society of the Inner Temple placed the book proudly on its shelves, the title pricked out in gold. Lord Coke walked through the City in state now, followed by a dozen men in livery. When he attended church at St. Dunstan’s, a clerk with a white wand preceded him. In June of 1614, Cambridge University by unanimous vote elected Coke High Steward, honorary office next below Chancellor of the University. Coke was immensely pleased.

East of King’s Bench, across the width of Westminster Hall, Lord Chancellor Ellesmere presided in his marble chair. This was the King’s ancient court of equity, Star Chamber’s sister, an extension of Privy Council authority. A *court of relief*, it was called. The common law could punish but it could not prevent. If John Doe’s neighbor began to build a spite wall that cut off view and sunlight, King’s Bench could not stop him but Chancery might. The common law was rigid. Suitors appealing from a decision at common law could obtain stay of judgment while Chancery reviewed the case. Ellesmere, especially vigorous in thus correcting the Common Bench, in twenty years of office had met with little or no resistance from the judges.

Toward the end of 1616, however, rumblings were heard from the southwest corner of Westminster Hall. “No appeal from King’s Bench,” said Coke, “to any court except the High Court of Parliament.” It was a reckless statement, born of desperation; among Coke’s attacks against prerogative courts, the most daring by far. With angry stubbornness, Coke flung himself against the King’s

great court of Chancery — always with one principle at issue: Chancery’s right to stop judgment in the common law courts.

Sir Francis Bacon, meanwhile, had been sworn a member of the King’s Privy Council, in his fifty-sixth year attaining a distinction for which he had yearned and plotted over three decades. From this new vantage point he at once renewed attack on Coke’s position, using the still pending Chancery fight and an even more important jurisdictional battle, known to contemporaries as the *Case of Commendams*. The suit challenged certain traditional royal rights in the granting of a church benefice. Serjeant Chibborne argued boldly for the two plaintiffs. His argument was reported to the palace, and James, through Bacon, commanded Coke to halt proceedings until after consultation with his royal self. Let Coke so inform the rest of the common law judges, “whereof,” finished Bacon’s letter peremptorily, “your Lordship may not fail.” In open defiance, the *Case of Commendams* was heard next day in Exchequer Court, following which twelve Judges met at Serjeants’ Inn and signed a letter, drafted by Coke. Reminding his Majesty of the judicial oath of office, Coke declared flatly that justice could not be delayed in the courts “for any letters of the King.” Bacon’s message therefore had been “contrary to law,” and with one consent the Judges had proceeded to the case at hand.

Once more the King had interfered, but this time the Judges stood firm. The bench not only “certified” that they were going ahead with trial despite royal orders, but when the Judges wrote their letter, trial had already been held. And instead of one judicial protest, James received twelve. His reply, from Theobalds, was peremptory and not a little sarcastic. The opening salutation addressed Coke as Privy Councillor, then the other Judges: —

“Trusty and well-beloved councillor, and trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well. . . .”

“Ye might very well have spared your labour in informing us of the nature of your oath. For although we never studied the common law of England, yet we are not ignorant of any points which belong to a King to know. . . . But we cannot be contented to suffer the prerogative royal of our crown to be wounded through the sides of a private person: We have no care at all which of the parties shall win his process in this case, so that right prevail. . . . We are therefore to admonish you, that since the prerogative of our crown hath been more boldly dealt with in Westminster-Hall during the time of our reign than ever it was before in the reigns of divers princes immediately preceding us, that we will no longer endure that popular and unlawful liberty. . . .”

As for a possible delay of justice, James continued ironically, he would be glad if no pleas at Westminster were of older date than this one. “Our

pleasure therefore is, who are the head and fountain of justice under God in our dominions, and we out of our absolute power and authority royal do command you, that you forbear to meddle any further in this plea till our coming to town, and that out of our own mouth you may hear our pleasure in this business; which we do out of the care we have that our prerogative may not receive an unwitting and indirect blow."

4

ON THE sixth of June, the Judges were summoned to Whitehall. Around the long table sat Lord Chancellor Ellesmere and seventeen Lords of Privy Council. When all were settled in their places, the King entered, took his seat at the table's head. At his Majesty's request, the Bishop read aloud Serjeant Chibborne's bold arguments of the April hearing; next, Bacon's letter to Coke, with Coke's brief reply; then the letter signed by twelve Judges and James's ironic answer.

These preliminaries over, James broke out with angry queries: Why had not the Judges checked and bridled "impudent lawyers" who encroached not only on the prerogative but "on all other courts of justice"? The Judges' letter was itself "a new thing, very undecent and unfit for subjects to disobey the King's commandment, but most of all to proceed in the meantime and to return to him a bare certificate." With a violent gesture, James tore the letter across. Twelve Judges fell on their knees and craved humble pardon. Their letter, they confessed, had been wrong "in form."

But Coke, still on his knees, raised his face to the King. If the letter's *form* had been regrettable, he said — for the *matter* of it he must enter into a defense. "The stay required by your Majesty was a delay of justice and therefore contrary to law and the Judges' oath."

"Mere sophistry!" James retorted. "Unto which," wrote the reporter, "the Lord Chief Justice in effect made no answer but only insisted upon the former opinion."

James appealed to Ellesmere, asked his opinion about the Judges' oath and if the stay required had been contrary to law.

Ellesmere delivered his opinion that the delay of trial which James had requested in the *Commendams* case had not contravened the Judges' oath. "And the Lord Chancellor," continued the reporter, "required that the oath itself might be read; which was done by the King's Solicitor and all the words thereof weighed and considered. Thereupon his Majesty and the Lords thought good to ask the Judges severally their opinion; the question being put in this manner: Whether, if at any time, in a case depending before the Judges, which his Majesty conceived to concern him either in power or profit, and thereupon required to consult with them, and

that they should stay proceedings in the meantime, they ought not to stay accordingly? . . . They all (the Lord Chief Justice only except) yielded that they would, and acknowledged it to be their duty to do so; only the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench said for answer, *That when the case should be, he would do that should be fit for a Judge to do.*"

It was a statement never to be forgotten, in simple dignity nullifying all that had gone before — and to the monarch, one last convincing proof that Coke must be humbled. On the final day of term before summer circuit — June 20, 1616 — James went to Star Chamber to sit in the emblazoned chair that had been so long (and wisely) left vacant by his forebears. The room was crowded, expectant, and where the common lawyers clustered in groups — barristers, Puritans, Parliament men — the air was charged with hostility. The monarch wore his crown and kingly robes under a cloak of purple velvet, crimson lined; his sword hilt gleamed with jewels. The audience kneeled, then rose at a signal as the sovereign prepared to speak.

"Give thy judgments," he began, "*to the King, O God, and thy righteousness to the King's son.* . . . Kings are properly Judges, and judgment properly belongs to them from God: for Kings sit in the throne of God, and thence all judgment is derived. It is atheism and blasphemy to dispute what God can do; so it is presumption and high contempt in a subject to dispute what a King can do, or say that a King cannot do this or that. . . . I remember Christ's saying, *My sheep hear my voice*, and so I assure myself, my people will most willingly hear the voice of me, their own shepherd and King."

No word that fell was new; James had said it before and often. Yet place and occasion lent it, today, an awful finality. Thirteen years of English residence had not, it was plain, changed this monarch one iota. An audience of lawyers knew it with dark foreboding. Only the times had changed. James remained the same Scottish absolutist who had crossed the border in 1603 and hanged a cutpurse without trial. "The absolute prerogative of the Crown," the royal voice continued, "is no subject for the tongue of a lawyer, nor is lawful to be disputed. In your pleas, presume not to meddle with things against the King's prerogative or honour. Some gentlemen of late have been too bold this ways; if the Judges suffer it, I must punish both them and you."

Bacon found himself triumphant. "I do take comfort," he wrote to James, "that I was the first that advised you to come in person into Star Chamber." The next course was to summon Coke alone, without his brethren, and let him be charged personally with offenses against the King. On the twenty-sixth of June this was done. There was a series of charges: —

Coke had given "too much heart and encouragement" to the cause of the premunires. He had

shown indecent behavior before his Majesty, the Lords of Privy Council and Judges; taking exception to the King's Attorney [Bacon] in his Majesty's presence. Further, a question being put to "the rest of the Judges, *If his Majesty should send hereafter a like case* — the rest of the Judges submitting themselves, the Lord Coke only dissented from all the rest."

Invited to defend himself, Coke declared that if he had erred he could only say *Erravimus cum patribus*, We erred with the fathers; he was not the first to charge that Chancery had overreached, "to the subversion of the common law." In the matter of *commendams*, he had been wrong, Coke admitted, to check Mr. Attorney General in his Majesty's presence; but his answer to the sovereign, "When the time shall come, I shall do that which should become a Judge," had intended no disrespect.

On June thirtieth, Coke was summoned again to Whitehall. The King, he heard, was not satisfied with his answers to Council last week. And though, taking into account his former services, his Majesty was not disposed to deal heavily, it was ordered 1) that the Lord Coke be suspended from his place in Privy Council; 2) that he forbear to ride his summer circuit as Justice of Assize. And 3) "that during the vacation, while he hath time to live privately, and dispose himself at home, he take into consideration and review his *book of reports* wherein, as his Majesty is informed, be many extravagant and exorbitant opinions set down and published for positive and good law. If, in reviewing and reading thereof, he find anything fit to be altered and amended, the correction is left to his discretion. Amongst other things the King is not well pleased with the title of the book wherein he entitled himself *Lord Chief Justice of England*, whereas he could challenge no more than *Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench*. And having corrected what he find meet in these reports, his Majesty's pleasure is, that he should bring the same privately before himself, that he might consider thereof, as in his princely judgment should be found expedient."

There was nothing Coke could say. These were not charges to be refuted but royal commands. "Chief Justice of England"? In Coke's last volume of *Reports*, the words had followed his name as author — a title in common usage since the Conquest. Coke bowed. "I submit myself," he said, "to his Majesty's pleasure." He turned to go, but had not reached the door when Lord Treasurer Suffolk called him back. "His Majesty," said Suffolk abruptly, "hath been informed that the Lord Coke has suffered his coachman to ride bareheaded before him. This His Majesty desires may be foreborne in future."

The significance of bareheadedness in coachmen has been obscured by the passage of centuries; perhaps only royalty was entitled to servants with heads uncovered in the street. Whatever its mean-

ing, the rebuke was extraordinary. To Coke it must have seemed sheer invention, Suffolk's last cut of the whip to show an arrogant barrister his place. "If my coachman," Coke replied, "hath rode before me bareheaded, he did it at his own ease and not by my order. This I beg your Lordships to take notice of and state to his Majesty from me with all humility."

5

WHEN summer was over, and the long vacation, Coke returned to London, ready, he said, with his amended *Reports*. On the second of October, he was summoned before Ellesmere, Bacon, Solicitor General Yelverton, and King's Serjeant Monteagle. There were, Coke began, eleven books, covering about five hundred cases. Among so many, faults were to be expected. Even Plowden's *Reports*, "which he revered much," had been found to contain four errors. This brief preface concluded, Coke handed to the Lord Chancellor a single sheet on which were recorded five small, wholly trivial mistakes of fact or of Latin translation.

On November thirteenth, Bacon dispatched to James the note that sealed Coke's fate: —

"May it please your excellent Majesty,

"I send your Majesty a form of discharge for my Lord Coke from his place of Chief Justice of your Bench.

"I send also a warrant to the Lord Chancellor for making forth a writ for a new Chief Justice, leaving a blank for the name to be supplied by your Majesty."

And on the day following, Chamberlain in one superb sentence (which he said was common talk) summed up the whole of Coke's troubled fate: "Four Ps have overthrown and put him down, that is PRIDE, PROHIBITIONS, PREMUNIRE, AND PREROGATIVE." Sir George Coppin brought the King's *supersedeas* to Coke in his chambers: "For certain causes now moving us, we will that you shall be no longer our Chief Justice to hold pleas before us, and we command you that you no longer interfere in that office, and by virtue of this presence, we at once remove and exonerate you from the same."

Taking the scroll in his hand, Coke read it, then bowed his head and wept.

Grieved, humiliated, Coke vanished into the countryside. Where service to the state was concerned, the best of life — though he could not know it now in his distress — still lay ahead. Coke was sixty-five, gray and lean, with a rugged, enduring look. For the first time in his life he found himself idle by enforcement. As days passed, he responded with none of the resignation held proper to his years but with a restless anger, brooding, comfortless, ready to burst forth when opportunity presented. In London his name remained current; people could not believe the Lord Coke was gone

from public life. Now and again he appeared at court, among the King's entourage. Word went round that he had been restored to partial favor and that his long-time enemy, Sir Francis Bacon, was disturbed thereby.

In November of 1621, King James was persuaded to call a Parliament — the first in seven years. Coke was returned from a Cornwall borough, as royal nominee. Perhaps the King thought that Sir Edward, well chastened, would be a strength to the Crown's faction. Yet few Parliaments of history have turned out so differently from plan. Coke in the Commons, the Earl of Southampton in the Lords, led the opposition. This Parliament, due to end disastrously, began in cheerfulness and mutual hope. The winter was very cold, the Thames frozen solid above the Bridge. Ice, thrown up by wind and tide, lay "like rockes and mountaines, with strange and hideous aspect."

James, carried from Whitehall in a chair (his weak legs had grown weaker with age), addressed both Houses in fatherly fashion, referring to past years, when there had been perhaps "some vanity in him, knowing not the state of this land." If the Commons would vote liberal supply, their money, said James, would not be ill spent, nor "fall into a bottomless purse." The pockets of burgesses loosened as they heard. What would not the Commons of England do for a King who stood before them in open manly acknowledgment of fault? Within a few weeks, Parliament had voted two subsidies, making clear, however, how the money should be expended, and that no precedent should be taken of supply granted so early, before any laws had been passed or public grievances expressed. James, delighted with the money, told Parliament of his happiness to find himself, after eighteen years enthronement, "enthronized now in his peoples' hearts."

6

AND with that the love feast ended. Parliament sat four months and not a law was enacted. The Commons were vocal, busier than ever in their experience. Monopolies, patents, corruption in trade and in the courts of justice — these questions put a stop to ordinary business. "The monopolizer," Coke told the House, "engrosseth to himself what should be free for all men. The depopulator [encloser of land] turns all out of doors and keeps none but a shepherd and his dog." This was the High Court of Parliament, with power to judge and punish. "He that questions whether this House is a Court of Record," said Coke, "I would his tongue might cleave to the roof of his mouth." Reviving the old impeachment process — unused for three hundred and fifty years — Parliament brought to the bar for trial offenders from high places and low. It was an extraordinary, abrupt sweeping out, accomplished in perfect accommodation with the

Lords — Commons as fact-finders, Lords as judges. "The House of Commons," said a member, "is like the grand jury for the whole commonwealth."

Coke, as chairman of the great Committee for Grievances, at once assumed a leading part. He had been a judge; people still referred to him as *the Lord Coke*. He found himself in a position of extraordinary prestige. *Pater patriae*, father of his country, Parliament called him; *bellwether of the flock*.

The Crown knew well that this was dangerous hunting; the spoor lay close to home. This was the Parliament that impeached Lord Chancellor Bacon and the King's Attorney General, Sir Henry Yelverton. Coke rose often to speak, not so much in defiance of King James as in aid of the Commons, to clear up uncertainty and out of his experience to remind the House of its full powers — its three great privileges — freedom of speech, freedom from arrest, and access to the sovereign "when the good of the Commonwealth shall require."

In the law courts, Sir Edward had been accused of harshness at other men's expense. Now that he shared the risk he spoke with equal bluntness to the Commons, seeming not to count the cost. The duty of the House was "to preserve the innocent and punish the nocent. I was charged with bribery, but did I hang down my head? I was accused, but was I daunted? No! I hate bribery." Coke addressed the House in parables after his custom, cracked jokes, and told stories, as perfectly at home as if he had never stretched his long legs under the King's Council table. "Commonly when you follow two hares you lose both," he told his colleagues jovially. "I would never take breviate of one side. I'll keep my ears open for both parties. I love to come even." Toward monopolies, Coke held to his old standpoint of 1604: "Best for a kingdom to have liberty of trade if it were well governed."

The Commons were breaking ground; uncertainty of procedure caused them to flounder, grow unruly. This again, Coke saw as danger; it was in the King's power to dissolve the session at any time he saw fit. And if in Coke's mind the King had no right to imprison members while Parliament was sitting, in James's mind the sovereign most certainly possessed this power and was prepared to use it. "Let us keep order in our proceedings," Coke urged his colleagues. "For Job, speaking of hell, sayeth, *Ubi nullus ordo* [where no order is]."

A House that laughs is a House softened to reason. During the trial of one monopolist, when passions ran high, a female witness appeared at the door. Should she be admitted to the Bar of Commons? There was no precedent, Coke said. Had the House read of Saint Bernard? Entering a church in Germany and being on his knees at prayer, he heard our Lady's image before him cry out in a small voice, "*Welcome, Bernard, welcome! 'Peace, Madam!' quoth Bernard. 'It is not lawful for a woman to speak in the congregation.'*"

Members listened, were diverted, refreshed — and followed after. The Lords made evident they liked it too, though they did not show the Commons' respect for Coke's authority of scholarship and experience. There was however something reassuring, disarming, about Coke's easy reference to the past. He brought in Lord Burghley's name, Popham's, Queen Elizabeth's — and more than once, Robert Cecil's, naming him affectionately as *the little great Lord Treasurer*. "When I was Speaker," he said. Or, "because I had served as the Queen's Attorney and so was conversant in every court. . . . It was resolved by Popham and all the judges, sole importation is a monopoly, and I, being Attorney General, brought *warrantes* against such and overthrew them all." By turns jovial, indignant, triumphant, Coke worked and schemed with his colleagues, moving easily between the two Houses with messages, plans, reports. And always, he talked. "Sir Edward Coke," said a newsletter in mid-session, "hath won his spurs for ever, and they all confesse that they could not have missed him [done without him] for that he hath so ledd and directed them all this parlement, that they cannot be satisfied with applauding him both before and behinde his backe, and indeed he is a happie man if he can leave [stop] here, for he hath proceeded hitherto with a great deal of sinceritie, temper and discretion more than usuall in him."

But Coke, characteristically, could not *stop here*. With success his confidence returned threefold. The rough assurance of manner on which the Commons leaned commenced to ruffle their Lordships. For a man lately in disgrace, Sir Edward made himself overmuch at home with his betters. With no hesitation at all, Sir Edward reminded the Lords of "King Alfred's law: namely there should be two Parliaments held each year" for avoiding injuries to the realm. Edward I had ordained a Parliament "for every two years at the least," Edward III, "one Parliament every year for redressing mischiefs and grievances."

7

SUCH a statement would have startled even the Commons; to the Lords it must have been stupefying. The palace faction hated all Parliaments and had done their best to stop this one. There was no questioning Sir Edward's loyalty to the Crown. But loyalty to James was not loyalty to monopolists, or to the courtiers and royal favorites who stood behind the royal grants. There came a day when Coke skirted near to open defiance. "It's necessary," he said, "that some law be made for time to come that no monopoly be granted, and they that procure any such may incur some great punishment. This will kill the serpent in the egg." Coke's words went out and were repeated.

On the twenty-eighth of May, James sent sudden

word that Parliament must adjourn. The Commons were dismayed; their business was but half done. "We must not return home with trifles," Coke told the House. Adjournment was not prorogation. "Yet if we go to the country and tell them the difference they will not understand us." The King consented to an additional ten days, and after adjournment, by proclamation swept away eighteen monopolies and listed another seventeen for examination by the courts. It was victory in fact but not in essence; Parliament had desired to cancel these grants through legislation, not by "the King's grace." The Earl of Southampton was arrested as he left the Council table and committed to close custody at Westminster, being "more curious in the powers and liberties of the Parliament than became any Privy Councillor." He had led the country party in the Upper House as Coke led in the Lower. Under examination it came out that meetings had been held in Southampton's Holborn house; the Earl was asked if he "had not practiced with some of the Lower House to cross the King." His worst offense was hatred of the King's favorite, the Earl of Buckingham; Southampton had been heard to say that he "liked not to come to the Council Board because there were so many boys and base fellows."

Sir Edwin Sandys and John Selden were arrested and committed to the Sheriff's custody. (Selden, though not a Parliament man, had been active, giving much offense to the Crown.) Rumor said that Coke had been sent for. "Petitions," he had informed the Commons, "are either of grace or of right. Our grievances are of right, but the true physis is by bill in Parliament" — a stand which the sovereign could not countenance. In no sense fearful, merely indignant, James was determined to rule as a King by divine right and put down insolence where he found it.

Sir Edward Cecil told the House that Coke had been misrepresented at Whitehall. "'Tis dangerous when things go between the head and the heart. Those things that may be cavilled at in the Lord Coke's speeches are told the King with aggravation, but the good service he doth him is concealed."

Almost immediately, Privy Council sent for Coke. "You have forgotten," they told him, "the duty of a servant, the duty of a Councillor of State and the duty of a subject." Kneeling, Coke was deprived of his place at Council table. "He answered little," reported Chamberlain; only "that he hoped he had fayled in none of these, but God's will and the King's be done." Eight guards escorted Coke to the Tower. He was locked in Lord Cobham's old quarters. One of the rooms had been used as a kitchen; as Coke approached with his guards he saw something scrawled on the door: "This room wants a cook."

Three gentlemen were ordered to search Coke's chambers in the Temple. His books and papers

were taken away, the doors locked and sealed. Privy Council debated how to exempt him from the King's General Pardon which accompanied a dissolution of Parliament. To strike his name from the list might rouse added resentment in the country. Best to accomplish the thing under cover of faults committed outside of Parliament. No man could be pardoned who had a bill against him in court. The Crown entered suit against Coke for thirty thousand pounds — an old debt supposedly due to Queen Elizabeth, once more exhumed to serve its purpose. Sir Edward was put in close confinement, customary only for traitors or murderers. None of his family was permitted to see him, nor could he walk outside his rooms.

Coke remained in the Tower nearly seven months. "Twenty-six weekes and five dayes," as he recorded it. Locked in Lord Cobham's rooms, on February second he had his seventieth birthday. The cold must have been nearly unendurable. Coke was allowed no books — perhaps the greatest deprivation of all — and like any poor forgotten prisoner, wrote verses with a piece of coal. Latin verses, they were, about the roaring of the Tower lions in their pit, the damp reeking walls so near the river, the smell (that prison stink of stone and old dried urine). "*Heu! horridus ille locus* — May God return me one day to my small house in Norfolk!"

Stories circulated. How Prince Charles interceded, but the King said he knew no *Edward Coke*. "Mr. Coke, then," said the Prince. "I know none of that name neither," James retorted. "But by my saule there is one *Captain Cook*, leader of the faction in Parliament." The Earl of Arundel, President of Privy Council and Lord Marshal of England, examined Coke and declared that he had spoken in Parliament to stir up rebellion. "I charge you therefore with treason. I have heard you, Sir Edward, affirm that by law he is a traitor who goes about to withdraw subjects' hearts from their king."

"I hold such an one to be a traitor indeed," Coke answered. "But he that goes about to withdraw the King's heart from his subjects, him I hold to be an archtraitor." Coke's papers were searched in vain by Privy Council, "a whole standard of them." Sir Henry Guildford was sent out to Stoke to take inventory; the estate would be excellent pickings for courtiers. "I found little but underwood felled," Guildford reported to Council, "and no damage done to the deer. I have made inventory of the goods in Stoke House and sealed up the principal rooms and also made inventory of the goods at Bailie's Farm, but not sealed the rooms as Mr.

Henry Coke and his family live there. I have forbidden any felling of timber or removal of cattle."

This time it looked indeed as though Coke's career were finished. "He has need to stand fast," wrote Chamberlain, "for if his footing faile never so litle he is in daunger to come downe headlong." Rumor had it that when Coke should be called to answer, it would be for his life. It was said also that the servant of a Gray's Inn lawyer, "Mr. Byng," had been racked for talking in defense of Sir Edward. The Earl of Arundel informed Coke that his Majesty, in spite of the order for close confinement, would permit eight of his most learned lawyers to confer with Sir Edward and advise him. Coke asked the Earl to thank the King for his favor. But knowing himself accounted of as much skill in the law as any in England, he needed no such help. Nor did he fear to be judged by law in the cause for which he was accused. "In such a one as I, if the King desire my head, he knows whereby he may have it."

Toward Easter, Coke's confinement was mitigated. He was permitted to walk in the Tower grounds; James gave order that his daughter Anne Sadleir might visit him, "she being a discreet woman and likely to endeavor to bring him to more conformity." Still later, Coke's eldest son, Sir Robert, was allowed to come and sit with him at dinner. Coke's case came up in the Court of Wards. He was cleared. Every Judge, those present in court and those who conferred, declared that Sir Edward "neither in law nor conscience was to be charged of any thing." Sir John Walter, the Prince's attorney, had even refused to help with the prosecution. "Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, whenever I open it against Sir Edward Coke."

In August, 1622, Coke was released from the Tower and permitted to go home, confined however to within a compass of six miles from Stoke. Early in November he received full freedom and returned to his chambers at the Temple. The suit in Court of Wards had been merely an excuse; Coke's real offense was his conduct in Parliament. Other charges had been attempted — arrogant speeches made when Coke was Chief Justice, his comparing himself on one occasion to Samuel. But these had quickly collapsed. Nothing in Coke's papers showed even a suspicion of disloyalty. It was impossible to keep Sir Edward in bondage without cost to the Crown's prestige.

"Throw this man where you will," said James — and must have sighed as he said it — "and he falls upon his legs."



An Atlantic Story



A Londoner who cherishes every vestige of the cockney, WOLF MANKOWITZ graduated from Cambridge University and now divides his time between authoritative studies of the Portland vase, humorous articles for Punch, and fiction. His first two novels, Make Me an Offer and A Kid for Two Farthings, were made into films, and his latest, Old Soldiers Never Die, was very favorably reviewed in its American edition last fall.

EIGHT YEARS IN THE MAKING

by WOLF MANKOWITZ

MRS. TOSHAK was forty-two when she first saw the archangel Michael at an auction rooms off Bond Street. She knew his name was Michael for the auctioneer called it as he made a note of the fact that a small collection of cracked Greek pots had changed hands. And she could see at once that he must be an archangel for he was nearly six and a half feet tall, and his classical features were set in a pale skin and topped with a growth of closely curled golden hair. He for his part — being older than he looked and admiring Mrs. Toshak's experienced figure as much as the encrustations of diamonds about her person — remarked to himself that there was much of the untamed gypsy in this still elegant lady who watched him in so predatory a manner.

Now to tell the truth, Mrs. Toshak was an Armenian carpet-dealer's wife who had come to London by way of Smyrna, Budapest, and Paris, where Toshak himself had had the decency to die after taking out a very sizable insurance policy with a gullible English company. Thence London, in the area of Sloane Street, with a small elegant shop in gilt and black and stripes, hung with dubious landscapes of blotched satyrs and forced nymphs. Mrs. Toshak was an interior decorator. She could at a glance tell just how well Michael would fit into her décor and business. As an experienced dealer, she could sense almost to the pound his market price.

The archangel Michael, for his part, was a recent importation from Vienna. His sponsor, a collector of Spanish Baroque furniture, had picked him up in a café in the Ringstrasse and had recognized immediately how well he would tone with the Baroque. As a valet Michael had left nothing to be desired,

but his employer, who had at first been quite enchanted by his man's innate sense of the aesthetic, began to worry at the gaps in his collection of Hispano-Mauresque plates. A dealer from whom he was about to buy one of his own pieces was stupid enough to mention an Austrian count who had sold it to him. "Was he six foot six tall and blond?" asked the collector. Michael and his employer parted company that same afternoon. The employer sighed for a week or so and then found a new valet through a fellow collector. And Michael found himself, without surprise, in the fine art business.

Thus it was then that Mrs. Toshak and Michael met in the pursuit of business at the very heart of the heartless world of their refined trade. Michael turned to leave the rooms after his last purchase, a slight sneer wrinkling his lips. He always bore in mind the fact that in the not far distant future he would be buying for much more than shillings, and he was cultivating a bidding manner suited to the higher levels of dealing. Mrs. Toshak cut across his exit swift as a dark cobra, and the two drew level at the swing doors.

"The last lot — you bought?" inquired Mrs. Toshak with a hard glitter in her eyes showing to advantage against the velvet of her voice.

"That is so, madame," replied Michael, making his words drip slowly with tenderness. "But surely — it must be — but no, how could it? — it is the Princess von Dorfensleben. My dear Princess, enchanted," and he stooped low to kiss Mrs. Toshak's hand.

Although Mrs. Toshak could not resist a smile of amusement at Michael's methods, she was forced

to admire the ease with which he fell into so patent a lie. In this way he was like her own dead Florio — a man capable of selling a silk Bokhara every day of the week. But so tall, so blond, so aristocratic. She introduced herself and enjoyed Michael's apologies for a minute or two. Then she returned to the matter in hand.

"Come to my shop at six with this rubbish you have bought," Mrs. Toshak ordered, and with a scintillating wave of her fingers she leaped into a taxi, leaving Michael to smile indiscriminately at the street.

In spite of his willingness to wait upon events with the same devotedness he had shown as a valet, Michael was a little perplexed by his new friend. With mixed feelings but with a delicious sense of anticipation he drew up at Mrs. Toshak's shop front, a discreet affair of gold and black cupidons surmounted by white brocade drapes with tassels everywhere. He entered, walking reverently upon the black carpet, his eyes turned down modestly as Mrs. Toshak came toward him from the shadowed depth of the room. They had hardly time to exchange the courtesies appropriate to such a meeting when the door opened again and in came Mrs. Toshak's expected clients — a portly gentleman with white mustaches, and a lady elegantly dressed as only a woman past her second youth need be.

Mrs. Toshak glided forward to greet them like a *grande dame* afflicted with the intimate huskiness of a brothel madam. She introduced them to Michael by his full title, and then as they looked together at a superb chandelier, she whispered to

Michael, "Sell her the Greeks — he is mine." With the formal politeness of an old dance the four then paired off, Michael telling the lady of the glory that is still to be found in Greece. "O Athens," said the lady, "O Sparta — I've never been to Greece. How lovely." For Michael had led from the general discussion to the particular pots he had to offer.

When it was all over, Mrs. Toshak and Michael looked at each other. Their faces were flushed and their eyes swam. Mrs. Toshak put out her hand and Michael's slipped a check into it. Then together they breathed, "Three hundred and seventy pounds." A moment later Mrs. Toshak had clasped Michael to her breast. He settled with her for a hundred and fifty. Only at one point in the discussion it seemed that a promising relationship was in danger. But he looked at her with a sudden, poignant expression of regret in his eyes. Her heart melted like the polar cap of the earth enjoying the first heat in its history. He got his hundred and fifty in cash.

Mrs. Toshak is now fifty. Michael is a little stouter, and he wears glasses. Many are the killings they have enjoyed together, Mrs. Toshak confidently directing, Michael leaping into the battle like a Prussian Guards officer and winning golden commissions every week. Soon he will be earning enough to keep himself in the style to which his employer has accustomed him — and a little later on perhaps he will be able to steal enough from Mrs. Toshak to buy a full half share in her prosperous business.

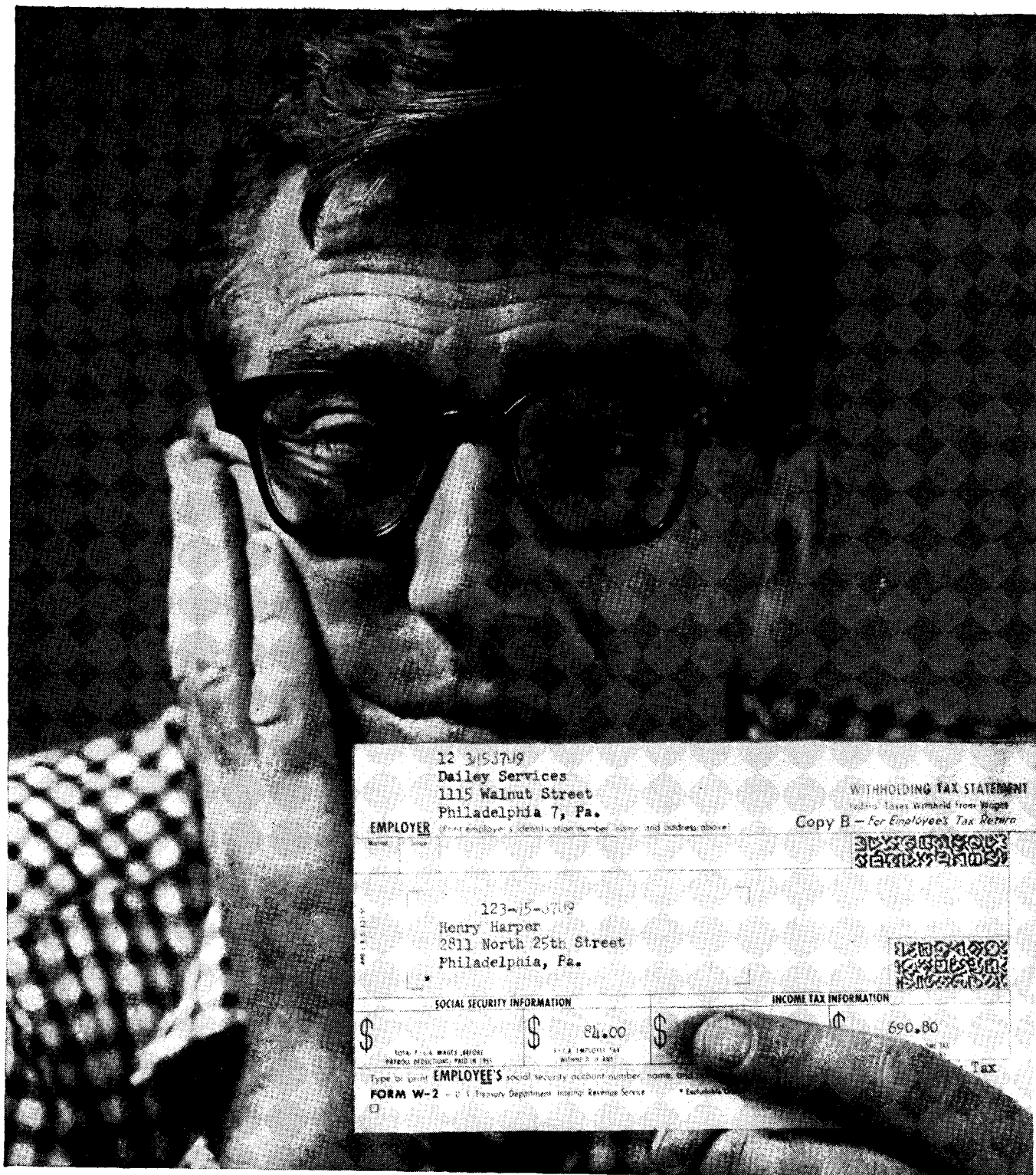


COAST FLIGHT

by WINIFRED HARE

Look down the air — the dark sea leaping
Slaps on white sand,
Lips the green land as a long snake creeping
Laps in his bands
Furrow and field in his body's reaping —
Water wraps earth like a serpent sleeping.

Seen from steel wings the deep sea sliding
Strikes to the sky
Blue like the scales of a snake in hiding —
Light to the eye
Spills over rocks like a blacksnake gliding.



Where do your taxes go?

You may have a pretty good idea where taxes go. But did you know that some go to help pay other people's electric bills?

They're the families and businesses that get their electricity from federal government electric systems like the TVA.

While about 23¢ of every dollar you pay for electricity from your power company goes for taxes,

those other people pay much less . . . only about 4¢ per dollar if their power comes from the government's TVA, for example. As a result, *you* are taxed *more* to make up for what *they* don't have to pay.

Don't you think this unfair tax favoritism needs thorough study and discussion? *America's Independent Electric Light and Power Companies**.

*Company names on request through this magazine

THE ATLANTIC

Bookshelf



THE *Peripatetic Reviewer*

BY

EDWARD
WEEKS

IN THE early years of this century, when there were very few mechanics in any square mile of America, the gasoline motor was an object of skepticism, curiosity, and blind trust. I saw it first at close hand in the form of a two-cylinder, two-seater buckboard in which Philip Latourette came courting my pretty Aunt Lucy. It was a low-slung contraption which looked as if it had been built of bed slats and whose coughing, cranky motor generally made it self-propelled. Uncle Phil (as he was destined to become) in knickerbockers, with goggles on his cap, drove over of a morning from Bayonne to Elizabeth, a roundabout ten miles. It was really something to be there at Grandmother's when he drew up in that dusty, maple-shaded street; to be allowed to climb into the seat which Aunt Lucy would soon occupy, to squeeze the rubber ball of the horn, and to hear the owner dilate on the special virtues of his runabout. "The great thing about two cylinders," he would explain with pride, "is that you always have one to fall back on if the other goes dead." But when both cylinders quit, a stubborn stillness settled over the little buckboard which no amount of priming and cranking could overcome. Spectators would gather; comments would drift down from the rocking chairs on the neighboring porches; some smart aleck would sing out "Get a horse!" — and that eventually was what Uncle Phil had to do.

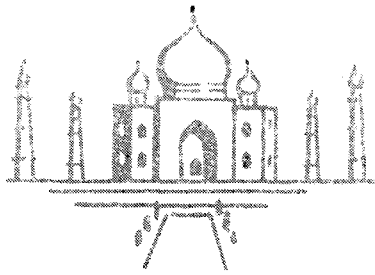
Uncle Phil knew where to look for trouble, whereas my father, who was one of the worst drivers ever at large in the state of New Jersey, drove with blind trust. Al Capp, the cartoonist, once remarked that he didn't want to take care of a car, he wanted a car that would take care of him. Well, that was Dad. He trusted what was under the hood, and while operating the machine he was a law unto himself. He preferred the left side of the road — it gave him a clearer view of what was coming and on the

left he was difficult and dangerous to pass. Fellow motorists were enemies and all pedestrians chicken-headed; he issued instructions to them through the windshield with imprecations and angry gestures.

I took my first drive with Dad in a rented car. The expedition was planned for a Sunday afternoon; we would drive up to the Mushroom Farm in Plainfield, a distance of sixteen miles, buy a mess of fresh mushrooms, and bring them back with us for a chafing-dish supper. To make it more fun, we invited the Churches: Uncle Allan, Aunt Hattie who was Dad's sister, Katherine who was a year older than I, and young Allan who was two years my junior — seven of us in a Rambler tonneau. Dad cranked her up, took the wheel, and we rolled away. We had our first blowout passing through Roselle, and luckily we found a mechanic who knew where the tire tools were and how to use the jack. Our second occurred on the outskirts of Cranford. This used up a lot of time since we had no spare; Dad said strong words about the owner, and after paying for the new tire and tube he had barely enough cash left for those mushrooms.

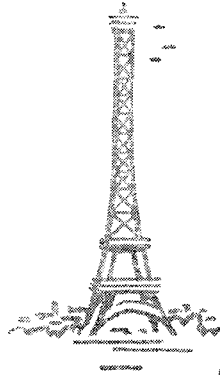
Then coming into Rahway the engine went dead. That was the last straw; we all got out and the car was pushed to a garage. I remember how dejected we children were as we sat in that garage, and how hungry; I remember Dad blustering, and the fuss over cashing a check; I remember Mother taking us across the street to soothe us with an ice cream soda; and I remember the long and silent trip home through the dark night.

The really reliable carrier of my youth was the trolley car. In my home town the trolley car marked "North Broad" came the nearest to our home on Clinton Place. This was a big, burly crasher which was raced by the dogs and got up considerable speed on the open parts of its run. It swayed so violently that I used to get seasick on the trip to Newark. The trolley that gave me the most fun in life was the jouncy open car which ran between Bay Head and Point Pleasant, New Jersey. It was operated, if I remember rightly, by a crew of one. He ran the motor, rang the bell, and collected the fares when we paused on the siding in the marsh, waiting for the down car to pass. There we would sit with the red-winged blackbirds whooping it up in the marsh mallows until the relay clanged its way by. Some of the college boys liked to smoke on the back platform, and once the car was in motion again they did more than smoke. They began bobbing up and down in a concerted rhythm, and with

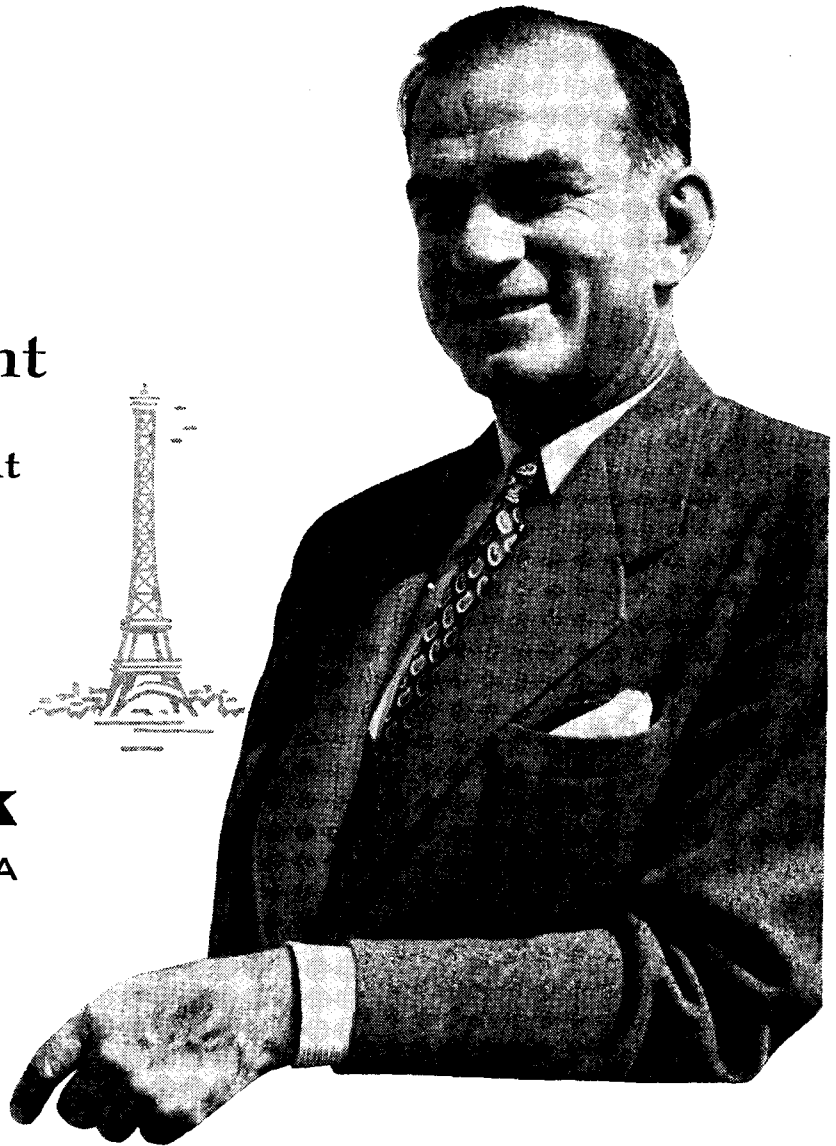
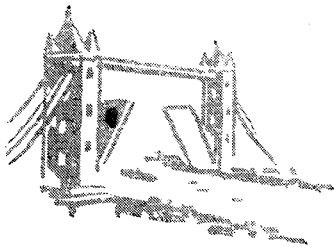


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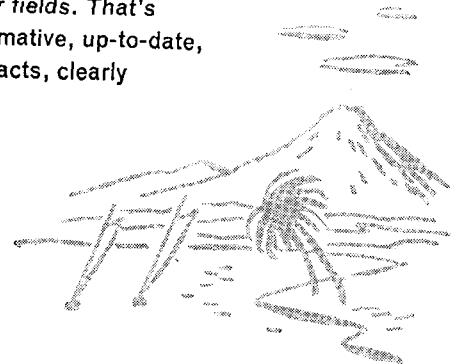
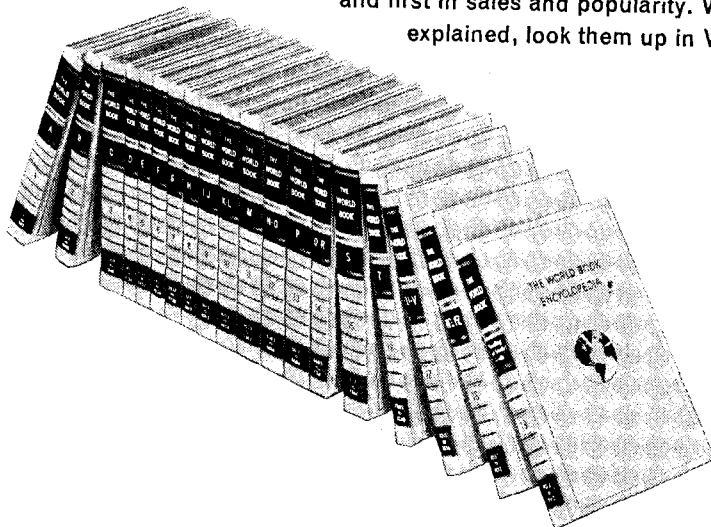


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their weight they could make that tiny trolley seesaw until the motorman was fit to be tied.

These memories are revived by my perusal of *Trolley Car Treasury* by **Frank Rowsome, Jr.** (McGraw-Hill, \$5.95), the most nostalgic picture book of this Christmas season. The photographs recall an era and what a pleasure a trolley could be: "Take a trolley to Coney or Rockaway," or a cable car up the steeps of San Francisco — or, indeed, the private parlor car "Mabel" that could be chartered in St. Louis for weddings, anniversaries, or even funerals. They are all here and many more besides. Who wanted 300 horsepower then?

Bertrand Russell at eighty-four

It is startling to realize the span of the living memory. **Bertrand Russell** was brought up by his grandparents. His grandfather was born in the early days of the French Revolution; had gone to visit Napoleon on Elba; led the fight for the Reform Bill in 1832; and, as Prime Minister, occasionally rebuked Queen Victoria for being too imperious. These two men between them have influenced and observed Britain's course from Napoleon to the hydrogen bomb.

Politics had been the habitual pursuit of the Russells since the sixteenth century, and Bertrand broke the tradition when he insisted on studying mathematics and philosophy. In his shy, loveless boyhood he dwelt in books, and that he was a penetrating and brilliant scholar was attested by Whitehead, who examined him for Cambridge. At Trinity he was happy and appreciated. His thinking and his writing, his friends and his aspirations, are crisply and skillfully evaluated in his autobiographical essays, *Portraits from Memory* (Simon & Schuster, \$3.50). These essays, seldom running more than nine pages, are a measure of the man and of his concise and beautiful style. "I like precision," he writes. "I like sharp outlines. I hate misty vagueness. . . . The more I am interested in anything, the more I wish to know the truth about it, however unpleasant the truth may be." Mathematics, he hoped, would satisfy his quest for certainty; philosophy, "my thwarted desire for a religion." The war of 1914 he thought a fateful mistake; he opposed it and was jailed for his pacifism. His visit to Russia in 1920, he tells us, was the turning point in his life. He held long talks with Lenin and other prominent men and came away detesting all that Communism stood for. For this he was ostracized by the left wing as, earlier, he had been ostracized by the right.

Sixty-one years ago, "walking alone in the Tiergarten through melting snow," he determined to write two series of books: "one abstract, growing gradually more concrete; the other concrete, growing gradually more abstract." This volume is the most personally concrete of the second series. It is alive with sharply etched portraits of his friends

and dons at Cambridge, of his grandfather, of Conrad whom he loved and of G. B. Shaw whom he liked to tease, of Whitehead who was his partner for ten great years, of Wells whom he respected, and of D. H. Lawrence whom he distrusted. His characterization can be deft and pointed, as when he says of Shaw: "Shaw's contempt for science was indefensible. Like Tolstoy, he couldn't believe in the importance of anything he didn't know. . . . As an iconoclast he was admirable, but as an icon rather less so." In his self-portrait, since these papers were written at different periods, he is repetitious, though he says things a little differently each time. Only in his remarks on America does his judgment seem out of date.

Rawhide and romance

Montana as it was in the 1880s when the cattlemen first began to fence it off and settle down — this is the setting for **A. B. Guthrie, Jr.**'s new book, *These Thousand Hills* (Houghton Mifflin, \$3.95). Lat Evans, whose parents had gone clear to Oregon in '45, has reached an age when he has to get away. His father's stern God-fearing ways are more than he can stand, and now that he is nearly twenty-one he knows that the fruitlands on the Willamette hold no future for him; at the first chance he signs on with Ram Butler, the Texan trail boss, and with him rides east and south to join the cattle train. Lat's job is to break horses. He finds a partner in Tom Ping and a friend in Mike Carmichael. With his lean strength and young courage he wins the men's respect. And there is something else about him that soon shows — his determination to get some cattle and stake out a decent place of his own. How Lat gets ahead is the story.

Mr. Guthrie tells it with rawhide and romance. There is plenty of punishing masculine detail here, as in the hot dusty struggle with the cattle; plenty of raw, numbing cold, as when Lat is trapping and skinning wolves; plenty of fear and suffering, as when he and Tom are captured by the band of Indians and held in captivity until Lat's desperate operation on Hole-in-the-Leg. The romance begins with Callie, Lat's girl in the fancy house in Fort Benton. Lat's ingrained morality keeps telling him that he should never be there, but her curiously virginal girlishness appeals to him; she makes him welcome in tender ways, she gives him her savings when he needs money most, and she comes closer to him than he will ever admit. This is the conflict in the book, the conflict which brings out that same streak of hardness in Lat which so repelled him in his father. I find Callie more believable than Lucy, Lat's wife, but neither of them as lifelike as the men. What I like best are the scenes Charles Russell might have painted: Butler riding at the head of the cattle; Lat breaking in Sugar; the race against the Piegan; the range after a blizzard; the campfire at night with Carmichael talking.

Reader's Choice

BY

CHARLES J. ROLO



The Fountain Overflows (Viking, \$5.00), Rebecca West's first novel since 1936 and a Literary Guild selection, is a leisurely domestic chronicle narrated by an Englishwoman looking back on her childhood "more than fifty years ago." Miss West tells us that the novel, which runs to 435 pages, was first conceived as "a very short story" and just kept growing. "If I started to write a limerick," she has remarked, "it would end up by being as long as *Paradise Lost*." One rather wishes that her recognition of "my weakness" had prompted some remedial action. In *The Fountain Overflows*, though it has substantial qualities, one often feels that the author's fountain is overflowing.

The novel focuses on the life of the Aubrey family, which is rich in musical talent and embarrassingly short of money. Mr. Aubrey is a kind of genius *manqué*. Brilliant but erratic, he has been "unfortunate" in a number of positions and now, the editor of a small newspaper in a London suburb, he continues to lose his earnings in speculation and to win a national reputation as a polemical writer. To his wife and children, he is both a wonderful, romantic being and a harrowing problem.

Mrs. Aubrey, a gifted musician whose ambitions were long ago frustrated, has made music the most important element in her children's lives. Mary and Rose, the narrator, are willing and promising victims of their mother's relentless determination to make them great pianists. Even Richard Quinn, when hardly more than a baby, starts piping studiously on the flageolet. The household tragedy is that the eldest daughter, Cordelia, a ravishing girl with red-gold curls who plays the violin, cannot be made to see she has no real feeling for music. To the others, her playing is a "blot on the family name"; to her, the family seems joined in a cruel conspiracy to discourage her from a career which represents the only possible escape from the bitter humiliations of genteel poverty.

Apart from the Aubreys' indirect involvement in a notorious murder

case, the novel's texture is made up of the small happenings of everyday life. "The main theme," Miss West explains, "might be said to be the way that human beings look at each other inquisitively, trying to make out what is inside the opaque human frame. Piers and Clare Aubrey loved each other but neither really knew how the other one thought and felt; Mary and Rose were divided from Cordelia. . . . They were all looking for clues to understanding."

The novel struck me as one in which a writer of large talent held my attention by virtue of being possessed by her protagonists, but did not, in the final analysis, register any particular point. The book's strengths, which are considerable, are the sensitive characterizations; the group portrait of a vital and vivid family in the age of gaslight, feather boas, and William Morris wallpapers; and the felicity of the writing. However much Miss West overextends her material, her turn of phrase is a delight.

Americans at war

The Last Parallel (Rinehart, \$3.95) by Martin Russ, a Book-of-the-Month Club selection, is in some respects unique among American war books. For one thing, as a record of combat experience, this journal of an American Marine in Korea has an unparalleled immediacy. It was kept up every few days and was submitted to the publisher in its original form — written in pencil in GI notebooks.

But what is most unusual about it, for better or for worse, is that it does not register any particular protest. By and large, our picture of Americans at war has come to us from men who, though they may have been brave soldiers, were to some extent misfits or "sorchads"; and who, understandably enough, wrote to communicate their horror of war and/or their indignation at the stupidities and injustices of the military system. Corporal (later Sergeant) Russ is a decidedly different type. He accepts, though conscious of its failings, the system which governs the Marine Corps; and he himself set out to be, and clearly became, a top-notch soldier. At one point he writes, "I'd rather be right here than anywhere else in the world. Whether I'm ready for the loony bin or not is beside the point."

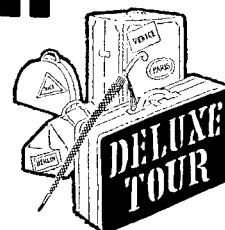
The book opens at a West Coast embarkation camp in August, 1952 — the author was then twenty-one.

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When it closes in September, 1953, he is boarding ship to return home for his discharge. With some interludes — leave in Seoul, a course in NCO school, a rest period in Kyoto — and some flashbacks, Russ's journal is a record of service in the front line. It describes, often with diagrams made on the spot, night watches in forward bunkers 200 yards from the Chinese; patrols in no man's land; the planning and execution of ambushes; sudden enemy attacks; "Diesels" (raids on enemy positions) and "snatch-parties" (sorties to recover the bodies of dead Marines). So factual and sustained an account of small-scale action could easily become monotonous, but I seldom found it so. This is reportage of a caliber which makes you a participant: you are so completely *there* that when a patrol ends without incident you are sharply conscious of relief.

The Last Parallel is far from being predominantly grim. Many passages — about military life, encounters with girls, the author's fantasies — are extremely funny. And the writing — in which crisp, straightforward American is oddly peppered with jive idiom, bits of homemade pig Latin, and ordinary slang — has a lively and individual vein of humor.

The author gives us only scraps about his background, and his revelations of inner feeling do not go far. He often notes that he is "terrified," and on two or three occasions, when a man is killed, he records in passing that he wept uncontrollably. But one finds him automatically volunteering for the most dangerous missions, and he is finally made leader of a unit known as the Captain's "suicide squad." The most explicit clue to his make-up is a passage which goes: "When I [joined] the Marines — this was a time when I was something of an idler, dissatisfied with the way things were — Mother remarked: 'Oh? Flirting with death?' She is one of the few people who know that my life is one big acting problem, a Stanislavski improvisation." It would seem that as a Marine he found himself cast for the first time in a role worthy of all he could give to it. And he certainly played it with singular dedication and incredible courage.

Capote in Russia

Life often imitates art, but it is rare indeed for life to imitate a particular artist and invite him to report the proceedings. This is pretty

much what happened when **Truman Capote** visited Russia along with the touring production of *Porgy and Bess* and its wondrously assorted entourage, which included Leonard Lyons, Mrs. Ira Gershwin (dripping mink, diamonds, and "darlings"), a New York financier, a stunning blonde of eminently U-extraction, and an un-housebroken boxer puppy.

The things Capote saw, listened in on, and recorded in *The Muses Are Heard* (Random House, \$3.00) are tinged with the surrealistic quality, with that hint of the zany and the fantastic, which one finds in Capote's own fictional world — the bewildered reactions of the Negro "cats" to the Russian "squares" (and vice versa); the comments on Marxland in jive talk; the wife of "*Le Bing Crosby de Russie*" who whispers to Capote on the dance floor, "Room 520. Tell your friends to bring me shoes, stockings, things for close to the skin. I will buy *anything*"; the shopping expedition to Leningrad's supposedly most "elegant" antique shop whose treasures turned out to be antique iceboxes and electric fans; the Radio Moscow man whose accent has Leonard Lyons dumfounded — "I keep wondering what he's doing so far away from Lindy's"; and Lyons urging the company's Sportin' Life to ask Bulganin or Khrushchev to be best man at his projected Moscow wedding, for which he has had made brown tails with champagne satin lapels and "shoes to match, natch."

The Muses Are Heard — which opens with the "briefing" given to the party in East Berlin and closes after the Leningrad premiere ten days later — has more to it than entrancing fun. While Capote's eye and ear have a radarlike sensitivity to the incongruous and the hilarious, they also dig the significant. What is dingy and nasty in Soviet life is revealed subtly and shrewdly, with a telling selectivity. Many an elaborately documented, long, and earnest volume on Russia has achieved a less telling image of the realities than Truman Capote's slim and witty chronicle.

The human condition

Seize the Day (Viking, \$3.00) by **Saul Bellow**, winner of the National Book Award with *The Adventures of Augie March*, contains a novella, three short stories, and a one-act play. Though different in subject and tone, they all have, to some degree, a com-

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mon denominator. Their world is one in which man is usually aware of his existence as dire pressure, frustration, entrapment — in one story, a welfare worker wanders desperately around a Chicago slum trying to deliver a relief check to a crippled Negro whom nobody admits to knowing; in another, a young chemist with money worries and a dangerously extravagant fiancée is suddenly overwhelmed by the sense that his personal aims count for nothing, that his destiny is merely to produce a dull son, a replica of his fiancée's hateful father. But Bellow's pieces also suggest — elliptically, to be sure, and rather obscurely — that the sense of subjection to an oppressive reality can be transcended; that truth of feeling, awareness, refusal to accept defeat can make man free.

By far the most interesting item in the volume is the novella, "Seize the Day" — a study of human weakness, striking in its fusion of terrible precision, wryly imaginative humor, and compassion. It describes a day of climactic desperation in the life of Tommy Wilhelm, forty-two but emotionally a child, a salesman who has lost his job, has alienated his wife, and has degenerated self-pityingly into "a slob." Harried for money, and refused both sympathy and help by his successful father, he has entrusted the last of his cash to a glib charlatan, Dr. Tamkin, who has guaranteed him a killing on the commodity market. After all has been lost, Tommy drifts into an experience which jolts him into truly feeling his own suffering for the first time. The climax, which is apparently meant to show that Tommy has finally begun to find himself, is unconvincing to say the least. Otherwise, the novella is sharp and moving; and the raffish Dr. Tamkin, with his phony scientific patter and startling powers of invention, is an inspired creation.

Potpourri

Japanese fiction, a newcomer to the American publishing scene, has made quite a showing this season. Two Japanese novels were discussed here in November, and now two more, plus an anthology, have put in an appearance. *The Heiké Story* (Knopf, \$4.95) by Eiji Yoshikawa, a modern version of a medieval classic, is an immense novel of twelfth-century Japan. The opening of this century was a time of disorder in the capital, Kyoto, and of decadence at the Imperial Court. The great Fujiwara

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clan, which for three centuries had dominated Japan, installing and removing Emperors, was losing its authority; and the Buddhist Church had grown rich, corrupt, and aggressive. The Emperor now called on the two provincial warrior clans, the Genji and the Heiké, to restore order, which they did, only to go to war against each other in a long-drawn-out struggle for power. Yoshikawa's novel narrates the spectacular rise of Kiyomori of the Heiké (1118-1186), a great warrior who became the Emperor's Chief Counsellor. It is a highly colored and tumultuous saga, densely packed with fighting, court intrigues and scandals, love affairs, and family feuds. I found it stirring stuff for about 300 pages, but the next hundred struck me as pretty much the mixture as before, and at this point I had for the time being had enough. Those who don't have to consume the novel in two or three sittings may well find that their appetite holds up keenly to the end.

Snow Country (Knopf: paperback, \$1.25) by **Yasunari Kawabata**, which comes to us in a beautiful translation by Edward G. Seidensticker, is one of the finest short novels I have read since the war. It describes the three visits of Shimamura, a rich Tokyo dilettante, to a hot-spring in the west of Japan, the snowiest region in the world. Here a young geisha, Komako, becomes his mistress and falls in love with him. But Shimamura is a man who cannot give himself to realities; he has made the western dance his specialty precisely because he cannot see it. Komako's sparkling freshness stirs him, and he is touched by the "irresistible sadness" she makes him feel, a sense of beauty going to waste and of imminent decay. But he cannot return her love; and their strange relationship, to which she gives so much, is doomed from the start. The natural setting — a felt presence hauntingly evoked — is made to play a dual role: it suggests the coldness and lonely grayness of life without love, and, in flashing images of beauty, it joins with Komako in setting up a counterpoint. The writing throughout is subtle, delicately moving, and full of striking imagery.

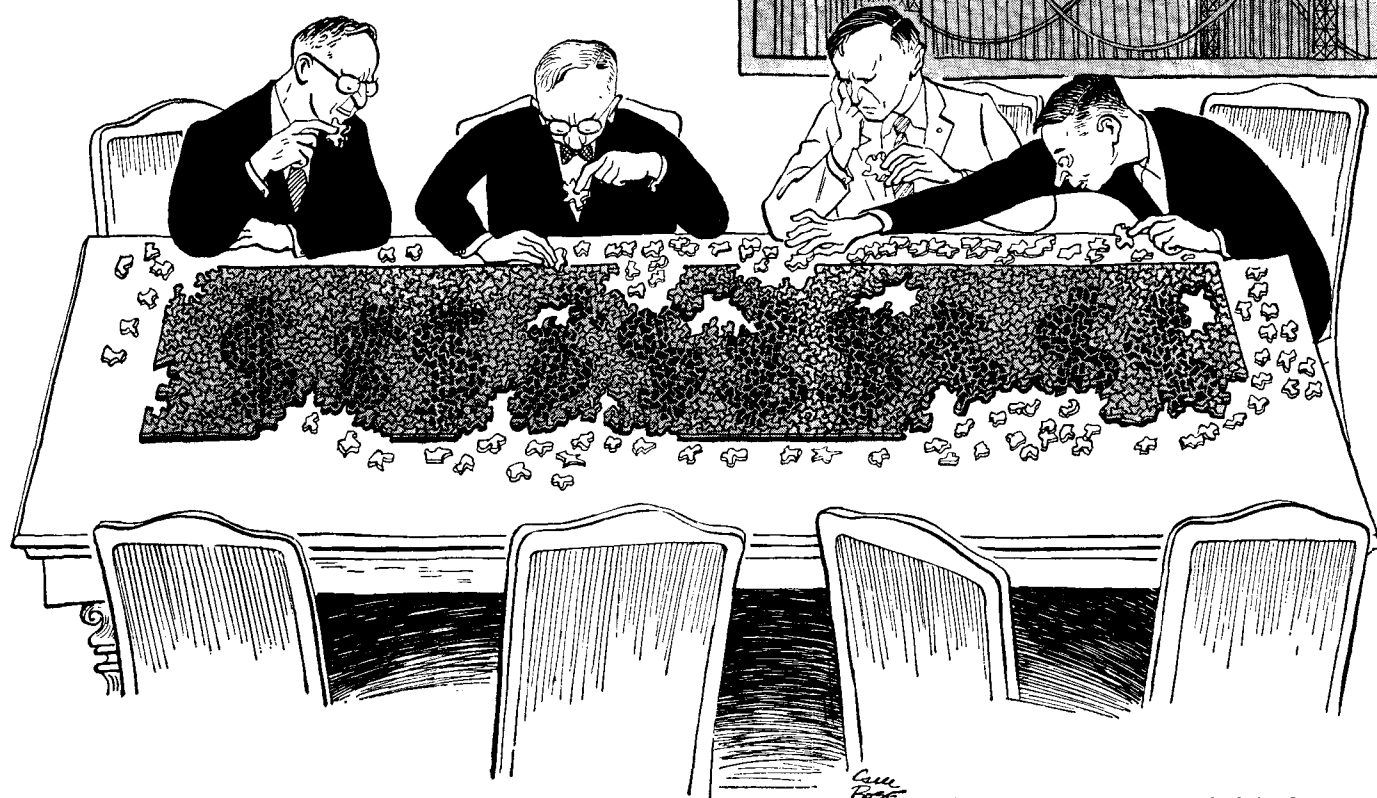
Those who, like myself, have been impressed with the qualities of Japanese writing and wish to explore it further can now cover a broad front in the anthology compiled and edited by **Donald Keene: Modern Japa-**

nese Literature (Grove, \$4.75). Mr. Keene, who is probably the outstanding American authority on Japanese letters, has included in his collection poetry and excerpts from novels and plays as well as short stories. Among the items of more immediate interest are further important samples of the work of two leading writers, Tanizaki and Dazai, already introduced to us with arresting novels; and two stories by the author whose *Rashomon* was made into such a memorable film, one of them being a version of the ancient tale brought to us in another great movie, *Gate of Hell*.

Of the latest first novels, I was most taken with *The Mermaids* (Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, \$3.50) by **Eva Boros**, a Hungarian émigrée who writes in English and does so most seductively. A tragic, softly spellbinding tale of sickness and frustrated love, it has an aura of the romantic coupled with a queer and touching gaiety. At a café in pre-war Budapest, Aladar Brankovich, a "rejected husband" and melancholy businessman, meets a pretty peroxide blonde, a young Italian named Lalla, who turns out to be a t.b. patient in a sanatorium. She welcomes his visits and he falls in love with her; makes ardent plans to marry her and restore her to the world of health. But their strange idyl — lived amid the friendships, the tragedies, the pathetic festivities of the hospital world — is eventually punctured by the girl. And to Aladar there comes the shock of recognition not only that he has clothed her in illusions but that he has also unconsciously deceived both Lalla and himself.

Antonello da Messina (New York Graphic Society, \$18.00) inaugurates a new series: "The Great Masters of the Past." It carries a short, somewhat inadequate text by **Stefano Bottari** and 51 reproductions of very fine quality, 39 in color. A Sicilian by birth, Antonello (1430-1479) mastered the Flemish technique of painting in oil pigments and introduced it to Venice in 1475. He also introduced the portrait with the face in three-quarter view in place of the traditional Italian profile, a change which enlarged considerably the possibilities of psychological characterization. His most famous portrait, "Il Condottiere," hangs in the Louvre, but magnificent examples of his work can be seen in museums in New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C.

ACCENT ON LIVING



SORRY, no mail or phone orders" — so the advertisement went, in obvious anticipation of a big scramble to come. The bargain lure on this occasion was women's ready-made suits which the advertiser offered at a beggarly \$175. Another shop nearby was announcing ready-made suits for men at \$245. The hundred-dollar felt hat was making its annual reappearance ("The Century" — get it?), and the shopping columns spoke knowingly of shirts at \$40 and a jigsaw puzzle for \$350. New York's largest department store slashed the regular price of its doll's baby carriage — \$34 — all the way back to \$27. Jewelry wandered in and out of the six-figure dimension, and most mink seemed to begin around \$5000, not including, of course, the federal tax. A chain of restaurants stood ready to serve a portion of roast beef, a genuine baked potato, one vegetable or salad, and beverage — isn't this our old friend the Blue Plate Special? — all for \$3.95.

These items, noted at random in the Christmas shopping season just

past, suggest a price structure that might reasonably be called firm. Even allowing for breaking a few jigsaw blades, that \$350 price for a puzzle may have disconcerted the man who expected to pick one up for a couple of hundred, but in none of these instances is the price itself important: these prices represent free enterprise and private expenditure. A man who chooses to reject the sterling silver "finger-saving" telephone dialer and to have one run up in platinum instead is at least misspending his own money. The hot stuff comes when public money and people on the public payrolls are caught up in the platinum spiral.

I make this statement after brooding for some months over a news story about an "investigation" into the affairs of a bridge authority — a public agency responsible, as I recall it, for a bridge connecting New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. It seems the authority had spent \$1,500,000 — it may have been \$2,500,000 — on a

building to house itself. The building contained several kitchens for the several grades of the authority's employees, several dining rooms, dormitories, showers, and such, and its showiest feature was a "board room" furnished with, among other things, thirty "Bank of England type" chairs at \$400 each. The rug and table ran the cost of the board room's furnishings up to somewhere around \$25,000, and I found myself wondering just what kind of business a bridge authority has to transact in such a room. What, over the years, does a bridge authority do besides collecting tolls and maintaining the bridge in good repair?

I never did learn the upshot of the investigation, or whether the Bank of England type leather chairs have ever been sat in, or whether the table is used for counting the day's intake of nickels and dimes or for displaying the wares of paint salesmen. In any case, it sounds like an ideal place for the bridge authority to sit down with one of the \$350 jigsaw puzzles.

CHARLES W. MORTON



OF NEAR AND FAR

by R. G. G. PRICE

Readers will recall R. G. G. PRICE as a thin man who failed to realize that he had become fat (July, 1955, Atlantic). He lives in Sussex and has contributed much light writing and literary criticism to Punch.

HAVING reached the stage of maturity at which my long and short vision require different lenses, I have had to give up the all-purpose spectacles in which I have lived so happily for so long and take to two separate pairs. (For one reason or another, ingenious devices like bifocals are unsuitable.) My life has suddenly been complicated by one more benefit from science's loony cornucopia. It is not that I keep leaving a pair here and there about the home; I clutch the case the whole time in my hand. It is deciding when to change over that I find hard.

Obviously I read books through my reading glasses and admire views through my distance glasses; but what about food? The more difficult branches of food, like the sort of fish that gets its bones folded inside, need at least as close vision as philosophy or poetry. This means I ignore the other diners. Though at home my loved ones would much rather look hazy round the edges to me than nurse me through a fishbone in the throat, when we go out to dinner my hosts and fellow guests will pretty soon realize that I am concentrating on the food rather than them. If I keep changing, now the reading pair for a quick peck, now the distance pair for an exchange of meaning looks with the lady opposite, restlessness will spread round the table.

Sometimes, of course, a quick look

through the short-range glasses will discover something like soup or jelly that does not require inspection before each mouthful is taken. I can change back at once to the long-range pair and keep them on until the end of the course. This will not work with birds or the kind of complicated pie in which the hostess likes to see every layer appreciated.

How am I going to manage for interviews? Interviews need facts and, unless you have a better-ordered mind than mine, facts live on paper. Do I look at my documents through the reading lenses and then change over to deliver my figures straight at my opponent's eye? While I am fumbling (and there is a flexible bit round my ear that is still getting folded in the lobe), I shall lose pace and my opponent will be moving into the attack. Do I retain the reading glasses the whole time and try to bluff him that my level gaze is piercing into his soul? If so, I shall miss those fleeting signs by which the observant detect weakness. Once he realizes that though his upper lip is beaded with sweat I haven't noticed a thing, he has me beaten.

I dare not keep the distance pair on the whole time and trust to memory or improvisation. The two faculties are so inextricably confused in me that it would not be safe. I shall have to give up interviews.

I am not sure whether it is simply less easy to read when I wear my long-range glasses or whether it is definitely harmful. If it is, I shall have to shut my eyes tight when passing advertisements out of doors. This might wreck lives. Imagine some go-ahead firm checking on how its advertising impressed the man in the street. It might be reported that the effect was to cause violent repulsion in at least one potential customer. If it was one of those firms that pride themselves on their efficiency and judge their efficiency by their readiness to sack, the man responsible for the advertisement might lose his job and the responsibility would be on me.

I have always tended to grow like my appearance very quickly. Put me in a graduate's gown and I feel scholarly. Put me in a white tie and tails and I feel I might have rivaled Fred Astaire if I had started earlier. In my reading glasses I feel intellectually incisive but socially ineffectual, perhaps a bit too clever for the lighter side of communal living but a man to whom all the best that has been

thought and said is not all that good when he gets down to checking on it. I put on the distance pair and I become perfectly adapted to the complexities of the contemporary world. I am the kind of passer-by to whom agitated bank tellers explain that the manager is lying indoors with bullets in him. I look forcefully in all directions, until stopped by the horizon or a wall. I rather think I should be pretty keen-eyed when faced with birds, but unfortunately during my many years as a one-pair man I never saw birds clearly enough to get to know their names. I might even begin recognizing people in the street. In time, rapid changes from one picture of myself to the other may begin to shake my personality-cohesion loose. The word "schizophrenia," if *vieux jeu*, seems appropriate to my final state.

I find life is even more puzzling than usual when I forget which pair I am wearing. I wander in from a walk and pick up a book. I can read it after a fashion but it is badly printed and the author does not hold my attention. If I have to write a review of it, I rate its interest low.

Or it may be that I have been reading and my wife calls me to go shopping with her. I look at the streets of our little town through my reading lenses and I find a lack of the clarity and brightness that I had remembered. The people look dull, almost decomposing. There seem to be small miasmas round the buildings at the further corner. I wonder whether it is healthy to go on living here. Or else I wonder whether I can have a hang-over and how I have managed it. I stand musing on the sidewalk and get buffeted by shapes. I feel that once more Life has found flaws in me.

I know well enough that sooner or later the glasses will be smoothly incorporated into my existence. I shall get no regular worry from them but I shall get no stimulus either. The novelty will wear off until they are as absorbed into my environment as my watch. Just at the moment, though, they are keeping me as young as pets.



ACCENT ON LIVING



TO MARKET, TO MARKET

by LISL AUF DER HEIDE

LISL AUF DER HEIDE was born in Vienna, came to San Francisco at age sixteen, and now lives with her husband and three children in Altadena, California.

I LOVE supermarkets, honest I do. How I used to enjoy the leisurely stroll through inviting aisles as I gradually filled my cart! But then the market acquired more and more gadgets to make customers happy, and my shopping trips began to go like this: —

Before I am allowed out of the car I have to shell out pennies, nickels, and dimes and the children head for the horses, rocket ships, and merry-go-rounds. Since the rides last all of forty seconds, they are inside before the door has closed behind me. Invitingly near the entrance are rows of candy and gum dispensers. For one penny they spill one handful (infant size) all over the floor, and that does keep the little ones occupied a few moments.

We then go through the turnstile (one argument, one bumped head) and select our cart. These carts are cunningly designed to contain your child as well as the groceries, and I do see children quietly riding in their little seats. But my children either skipped that stage or (I don't want to believe that) they never reached it. There was a period, it is true (I think it was the seventeen days between the time he crawled and walked), when Mark consented to ride the cart. But he persistently tasted every single item I bought, from soap to nuts. After that he insisted on wheeling the wagon by himself, and since he couldn't see over or through the groceries, he found the shoppers he ran

into highly intolerant. So then he settled down to just helping me.

Whereas all innocuous objects, such as canned and boxed dog-food, paper napkins, soaps, and so forth, are on the top shelves, cookies, candy, dye, ketchup, ink, and liquid fertilizer are within easy reach of small, helpful hands. One can't blame a four-year-old for reaching toward the red, shiny, slippery jar of beets — one can only jump aside. Made it!

And I had never realized how cleverly balanced those gleaming mountains of fruit are, till Mark pulled an apple out of the bottom row. This principle works on stacks of cans, boxes, jars, and bottles, too, and we can prove it.

But we are only half through. Near the meat counter is the drinking fountain, the sight of which invariably moves the parched lips of all children under three feet tall to whisper "I wanna drinkwater!"

No satisfactory method has been found to date for lifting the child, holding him steady, and putting even pressure on the control button simultaneously. Sometimes the child insists on doing the pressing "by myself" and then we all go home and change.

And right there while we are so handy, they have stationed one of several ingenious lures: —

1. A man who will give away one of something if you will buy two of same, and of course you already have three at home.

2. A lady who is pouring very synthetic punch into thimble-sized cups. On closer acquaintance the punch proves to be very sticky and to stain better than dye.

3. A girl who is handing out tiny pieces of



cheese speared on toothpicks. (Mark hates cheese, and I tried to tell him he wouldn't like it. The look on his face as he returned the half-chewed portion lost every sale in the vicinity.)

4. An automatic pig with red, glowing eyes and an electronic voice in its belly that gives speeches about the beauties of pork products. It takes amazingly little electronic knowledge to put him on the blink. Any four-year-old can do it.

The expansion of supermarkets to include such items as boxes of pins (oh thousands and thousands of pins), packages of bird seed, tubes of toothpaste (do you know how many feet of paste each tube contains?), cages full of birds (their wings are *not* clipped), canisters full of golf balls, and other rolling, flying, breaking, and elusive objects, has opened vistas of hitherto unforeseen hazards.

But at last I have seen the light. Lately our shopping trips go like this: With bribes clutched in their eager fists I line up the small fry and instruct them to disband. Under no circumstances, short of matters of life or death, are they to be seen with or near me, or to let it be known that they are even slightly acquainted with me or related to me or in any way associated with any part of me.

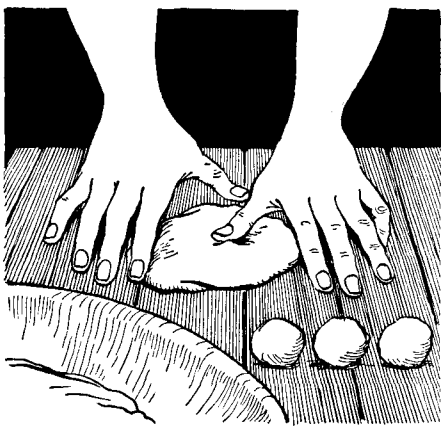
So now, when I leisurely stroll through the aisles, choosing and rejecting, and hear the distant rumble of cans, the thumping of stampeding apples, or the crash of glass, Mrs.

Brown and I look at each other (her two are somewhere around), say "Tsk, tsk," and march peacefully on. And sure enough, there goes the manager shaking water out of his hair. Guess Mark got his drink all right!

NO LETTER TODAY

by VIRGINIA BURNS FEINE

Oh, swifter my key in the mailbox would be
Were I not a prophet and sure
That, of treasures for me, the tally will be
One illustrated brochure
On a course, for a fee (money back guarantee);
Two ads that start "Dear Epicure";
A well-worded plea from the branch library
For overdue literature;
Soap coupons for free, and the last infamy,
A postcard without signature.



THE BORDER TORTILLA

by WALTER O'MEARA

WALTER O'MEARA is the author of many stories and several novels, the most recent of which is *Minnesota Gothic*.

IT is a remarkable thing that perhaps the hardest, harshest, most brutal strip of habitable soil in North America — a land of desert, prickly pear, and drought-stricken cattle dying on their feet with cholla cactus sticking to their muzzles — should have produced one of the lightest, daintiest, most delicate, and most delectable items of everyday fare on the continent. I refer to the border tortilla.

And please — I beg of you! — do not confuse this tortilla of the border with the ordinary corn variety made in "tortilla factories" throughout Mexico and even sold in tins from Texas. We are talking of two different things, *señores y señoras*.

This is not to disparage the corn tortilla too much. But when we speak of the border tortilla — *eso es harina de otro costal*. Or, as it would be understood in Pitiquito, that is a horse of another color.

I have never encountered the border tortilla except along the Arizona-Sonora line, but I believe it is known the length of the boundary. Deeper Mexico is regrettably a stranger to it.

In contrast to its maize relation, the border tortilla is made of high-gluten wheat flour. Whereas the former is about the size of a small plate, the border tortilla is as big as a Mexican hat. The corn tortilla is about as thick as a silver dollar; you can practically read through a border tortilla.

When my wife and I went on a picnic with our friends Ernesto and Florita, we ordered tortillas from Maria Cruz, who lived just "acrossa-line." She was still making them

when, after a visit to the cantina in Mesquite, Ernesto and I arrived with a case of cold beer — the proper accompaniment to any Mexican meal.

She had a fire of mesquite wood going in her cookstove, and the kitchen of her little adobe house was drenched in the deliciously mingled odors of freshly baked tortillas and mesquite smoke. And if you have ever smelled a mesquite-wood fire, by the way, you know that neither hickory, applewood, nor New Mexico's celebrated piñon can rival its wonderful fragrance or the delicious flavor it imparts to food.

In a big wooden bowl called a *batea*, Maria had a lump of dough made of flour, lard, salt, and a little water. The lard had been worked into the flour, Florita explained; then the water had been added very carefully until the mixture "didn't stick any more."

Grabbing hold of this lump of dough with her left hand, Maria squeezed until a little sphere about the size of a golf ball popped up in the circle of her thumb and forefinger. This she plucked off with her right, as one might pick a puffball in the field, and placed it on her scrubbed wooden table. When she had a dozen such balls in a row, as alike as sparrows on a telegraph wire, she scooped one up and began to pat it out.

"This," Ernesto commented, "is the important part. A girl who can make good thin tortillas can always get a husband around here. It was when I first saw Florita making tortillas in Hermosillo that I fell in love with her."

"You can see how much time it takes," Florita said, ignoring this. "A woman is a fool to spend so much time, just to please a man's stomach, no?"

As one watched Maria, it was certainly plain that time — and a lot of it — is an important ingredient of the border tortilla. And perhaps a smile, too, like Maria's; and the particular jaunty rhythm with which she performed all she was doing.

Starting with the little globe of dough, she patted and pulled at it, flipping it from one palm to the other in flawless cadence, until she had made it into a disk about the size of a saucer. And this, you would have thought, was about the limit to which such a fragile sheet of dough could be stretched. But Maria, it appeared, was just warming up.

"Now comes the tricky part,"

Ernesto said. "I have seen even Florita ruin a perfect tortilla at this point."

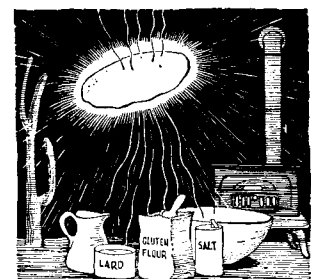
Now the tortilla was growing, as if by some kind of magic, under the manipulation of Maria's skillful brown hands. It was growing larger and larger, thinner and thinner; it was as large as a dishpan and no thicker than paper, and Maria was no longer flipping it from palm to palm, but from arm to arm. Only its continuous and rapid transference from one round forearm to the other, with a few lightning pats between passes, saved it from falling apart of its own weight.

"Ole!" Ernesto murmured appreciatively. "On the fire now, *chica*."

She flung him a disdainful glance and finished off the edges to tissue thinness. Then with a sudden dance-like motion, she tossed the big disk — so fragile now that it almost floated on the air — onto a hot baking sheet. It puffed up immediately into an all-over pattern of creamy bubbles and blisters. After perhaps thirty seconds, Maria made a lightning snatch at its curling edge with her bare fingers and flipped it over. A few seconds later — the whole thing took little more than a minute, I'm sure — she plucked the tortilla from the fire, folded it neatly into a fourfold wedge, placed it on a stack of finished tostadas, and was patting out another puffball of dough.

I said "tostadas," and the border tortilla is often called that in its untoasted state, but incorrectly. The real tostada is the border tortilla opened up to its full size, quickly toasted in a very hot oven or over live coals (preferably mesquite), then served warm in big, jagged, crackly fragments covered with golden blisters and glossy streaks of melted butter. *Hombre!*

And that's the way we served Maria's when — a couple of hours late, which is hardly anything in Mexico — we arrived at a cool box-canyon in the Poso Verde Mountains and had our picnic with Ernesto and Florita. It was a lovely picnic. The Mexicans are lovely people. Didn't they invent the tostada?





by JOHN M. CONLY

Bach: Concerto in D Minor for Violin, Oboe, and Strings; Concerto in A Minor for Flute, Violin, Harpsichord, and Strings (Antonio Janigro conducting I Solisti di Zagreb; Anton Heiller, harpsichord; Vanguard BG-562: 12"). A pluperfection of sound, from both players and recording engineers, and a brisk, joyous, and knowledgeable beat from Mr. Janigro make this a disk to be loved at first hearing and lived with happily ever after.

Beethoven: Violin Concerto (Jascha Heifetz, violin; Charles Munch conducting Boston Symphony Orchestra; RCA Victor LM-1992: 12"). This gains immediate preferment over all other versions. It may not be an "inspired" performance, but I'm sure I don't know how inspiration could have enhanced the utter mastery and flawless taste displayed here by everyone concerned. So don't wait, unless it be for the stereophonic tape version, sure to come forth soon.

Bernstein: Serenade for Violin, Percussion, and Strings (Isaac Stern, violin; Leonard Bernstein conducting Symphony of the Air; Columbia ML-5144: 12"). This is but one of four records Columbia has issued simultaneously in tribute to, or recognition of, the somewhat fabulous Mr. Bernstein, who can do anything (last year, for instance, he became co-director of the New York Philharmonic and wrote the score for the musical play *Candide*). On one of these disks (ML-5145) he doubles as pianist and conductor in the Mozart Concertos No. 15 and No. 17, landing in each case among the top two of existing versions. On another (CL-919) he analyzes jazz, with the aid of a good combo and Bessie Smith. On a third (CL-918) he traces the evolution in Beethoven's sketchbook of the first movement of the Fifth Symphony, illustrating orchestrally (the reverse of the record offers the Bruno Walter reading of the complete Fifth). Both of the foregoing, in-

tensely interesting, were Omnibus programs. As for the Serenade, it is a 1954 work in a big, sane style, inspired by Plato's *Symposium*, not uncomplicated but charged with charm and force which are more and more apparent on repeated listening. Stern and the Symphony of the Air play it beautifully.

Debussy: Songs with Brahms and Hugo Wolf: Lieder (Suzanne Danco, soprano; Guido Agosti, piano; London LL-1329: 12"). One side is given over to three Debussy cycles — *Trois Chansons de Bilitis*, *Le Promenoir des Deux Amants*, *Ariettes Oubliées*. On the reverse are ten of the best-known songs (five each) of Brahms and Wolf. The salient feature of the performance is intelligence. Miss Danco's voice is lean, linear, not pretty in all ranges. Only the Brahms suffers because of this. In the Debussy and the Wolf, the flawless matching of verbal to musical subtlety far more than outweighs any lack of mere prettiness. The recording is good except for some rumble — the Debussy side, at least, is a remastering of a ten-inch disk now withdrawn.

Haydn: Symphony No. 100, "Military" (Hermann Scherchen conducting Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London; Westminster W-LAB-7024: 12"). Seven years ago Scherchen and Westminster astounded record fanciers around the world with a "Military" deemed then a sonic wonder. It was inevitable that they would re-record this, using newer techniques, and they have, on one of Westminster's super-fi Laboratory Series disks. I was a little disappointed. The new recording offers a better orchestra, but there seems to be a hint of tongue-in-cheek about the performance, and the sound effects are exaggerated, especially the triangle: I thought my telephone was ringing! Despite all of which, I am sure the record will sell like fury.

Lalo: Symphonie Espagnole with **Bruch: Concerto No. 1** (Isaac Stern, violin; Eugene Ormandy conducting Philadelphia Orchestra; Co-

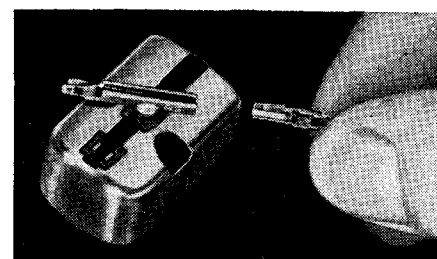


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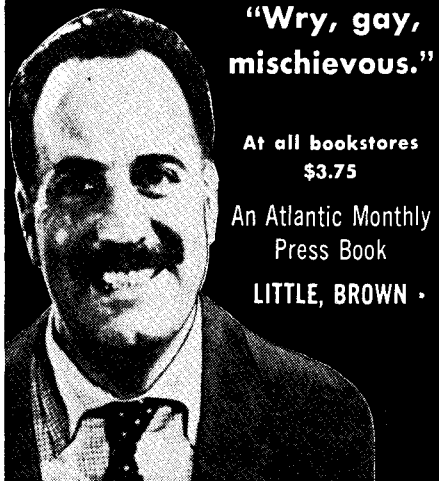
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LITTLE, BROWN



lumbia ML-5097: 12"). So close an approach to technical perfection in a musical performance you don't often hear: this is for all fanciers of fine fiddling. Stern's Bruch will stand interpretative comparison with any version in the catalogue. His Lalo, too, is excellent, but this work sounds like better music when there is less emphasis on violin virtuosity. I slightly prefer the London playing by Campoli and Van Beinum.

Mozart: *Così Fan Tutte* (Karl Böhm conducting Lisa della Casa, Christa Ludwig, Emmy Loose, Anton Dermota, other soloists, Vienna State Opera Chorus, Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra; London XLLA-32: three 12"). On a crudely comic plot, Mozart superimposed some of his most beautiful operatic writing. The fairly recent Angel version (Von Karajan) concentrated on the latter, playing down the comedy. The older Columbia English-language recording played up the comedy. In Böhm's new effort he tries to do justice to both aspects, and with some success. The result is something perhaps less purely beautiful than the Angel set, but rather more operatic. The London sound is just slightly better, too.

Mozart: Symphonies No. 39 and No. 41, "Jupiter" (Bruno Walter conducting New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra; Columbia ML-5014: 12"). Neither of these most majestic of Mozart symphonies exists in any other recording so satisfactory, so charged with enveloping vigor or couched in such bright and solid sound. A very safe buy indeed.

Strauss, Richard: *Don Quixote* (Arturo Toscanini conducting NBC Symphony Orchestra; Frank Miller, cello; Carlton Cooley, viola; RCA Victor LM-2026: 12"). One must suspect that Toscanini was interested in the works of Strauss chiefly as technical achievements, from the way he played them. Even so, with the Maestro the driven adepts of the NBC Symphony at their best, this approach could produce real excitement, as it does here. The record was made from a 1953 broadcast, and the sound is not bad. I'm still inclined toward the version by Clemens Krauss and the Vienna Philharmonic.

Vaughan Williams: Symphony No. 8 with Bax: *The Garden of Fand* and **Butterworth: *A Shropshire Lad*** (Sir John Barbirolli conducting Hallé Orchestra; Mercury MG-50115: 12"). Vaughan Williams' Eighth, finished a year ago when he

was eighty-three, is engagingly unmonumental, being by turns pleasantly rambling, gently rhapsodic, and vigorously playful. Altogether it is compact and thoroughly English; indeed it put me so much in mind of Shakespeare's *Henry IV* that I got out Elgar's *Falstaff* and played that, but there is no resemblance. The recording was Mercury's first overseas venture, and a very successful one. The Butterworth and Bax works, worthy but unassuming, fill out Side 2 most adequately.

Samuel Beckett: *Waiting for Godot* (Bert Lahr, E. G. Marshall, Kurt Kasznar, other members of the New York cast; Columbia 02L-238: two 12"). Playgoers and critics both were furiously divided about the merits of Beckett's tragicomedy *Waiting for Godot*. Some called it great, others called it nonsense. I don't know if it's great, but it certainly isn't nonsense: it made good sense to me. It has no real plot, except the one you build out of a series of situations, some shocking, that Beckett gives you. Not for everyone, but very stimulating to some.

John Donne: *Sermons and Meditations* (Herbert Marshall, reader; Caedmon TC-1051: 12"). Death and Doubt are our great fears, and a mind that can harry them out in itself, and hold them up for investigation, merits not only our admiration but something warmer. Such a mind was Donne's, a rarity made rarer by a wondrous gift for improvisation in Earth's most potent and beautiful language. There are other aspects of Donne, in effect equally poignant, but until we can have those let us have these. Mr. Marshall reads understandingly and a little too close to the microphone: turn down the bass control slightly.

Shaw: *St. Joan* (Siobhan McKenna, Ian Keith, Earle Hyman, other members of the Cambridge Festival Production, directed by Albert Marre; RCA Victor LOC-6133: three 12"). Not many people could get into the Phoenix Theater in New York and the other small houses where this production has been presented, so this record should be welcome. It remains to be said that the play makes excellent phonographic fare, exciting and comprehensible, and that Miss McKenna (whose brogue proves irrelevant) makes an endearing and irresistible Joan. You may need a handkerchief before she's through with you.

Pleasures and Places



TOURIST IN SPAIN

THE Spanish proverb, "Africa begins at the Pyrenees," contains a truth which might better be put: Europe *ends* at the Pyrenees. Spain is not Africa — and it is not Europe. The two forces which have decisively shaped contemporary European civilization — eighteenth-century rationalism and the Industrial Revolution — influenced Spain little and late. Despite the skyscrapers in Madrid and Barcelona, the streamlined A.T.E.S.A. motor coaches with reclining seats, the new hotels with swimming pool and with a radio in every room; despite the chain of American-style "California" restaurants and the other symbols of modernity, Spain remains spiritually withdrawn from the twentieth century.

This is one of its great attractions to the tourist. In Spain, the European as well as the American finds himself truly in a different world.

As Gerald Brenan has said in his fine book, *The Face of Spain*: "Spain today gives off a note which is unlike any other — a sharp, penetrating, *agridulce* [bittersweet] strain, both harsh and nostalgic like that of its guitar music, which no one who has once heard will ever forget. The northerner in search of new sensations has every reason for going there."

Spain's separation from the modern age, which gives it its distinctive flavor, is not without drawbacks. To the majority of Spaniards, the concept of efficiency has little meaning. Everything that is mechanical or that depends on organization is apt to function spottily. And the Spanish themselves like to tell you that there is only one thing in Spain which starts, and runs, on time — the bullfight.

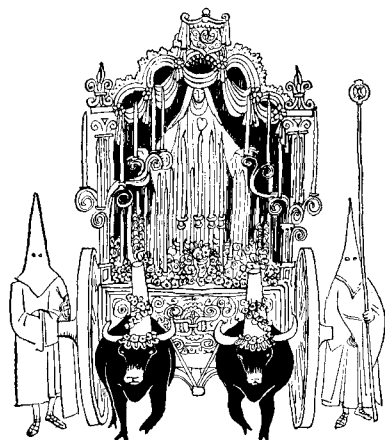
One aspect of Spanish life that is an unqualified delight to tourists is the high standard of honesty. Another

is the attitude toward tips. In this matter the Spanish, though their wage scale is just about the lowest in Europe, behave with a dignity which contrasts shiningly with the pressure tactics and frequent surliness of the French. A proud people, they thank you ceremoniously for whatever you give them, conveying by their manner the suggestion that your action was gracious but not really necessary.

The tourist boom

During the past seven years, the annual number of American visitors to Spain has increased nearly 2000 per cent. A major factor in this tourist boom is the exchange rate, which makes Spain the cheapest country in Europe for foreigners. Officially, the dollar is worth 38.95 pesetas, and you can get 10 per cent more by buying your pesetas in the United States; the Spanish government allows each visitor to bring up to 10,000 pesetas into Spain. At this rate, a room for two with bath in

Spain's de luxe hotels costs a bit over \$6 daily, and a single under \$4, with an addition of about 20 per cent for service and taxes. The corresponding rates in Category I hotels are around \$4.50 and \$2.50. In the *paradores* or



luxury inns operated by the Spanish State Tourist Department — and those I have visited were exceedingly attractive — the top charge for room and board is \$3.50.

The cost of food and wine in Spain is equally moderate. A meal in restaurants with a solid reputation ranges between \$2.25 and \$3 per person, wine and tip included; and there are many more modest places where the bill will come to less. In the half-dozen most expensive restaurants in Spain, a couple can dine handsomely for under \$10, sumptuously for \$12.

For U.S. travelers going straight to Spain, the most convenient starting point for a Spanish holiday is Madrid; and the best way of getting there is via TWA, which has seven flights weekly from New York with stopover privileges in Lisbon. Round-trip fares are: First Class, \$857.60; Tourist, \$576.60; Fifteen-day Excursion rate, \$479.60. By investing a further 12 per cent in transportation, you can proceed via TWA to Rome and stop off at Geneva, Zurich and Paris, or Frankfurt and London, on your way back to the United States. The state-owned Spanish airline, Iberia, offers two nonstop flights weekly to Madrid, and Pan American flies to Barcelona. If you hanker for a sea voyage, you can take either the Italian Line to Barcelona, the American Export to Barcelona or Algieras, or the Home Line to Gibraltar.

Getting around Spain is decidedly more of a problem than getting there. The express trains between the major cities are fairly good — the rest range from bad to terrible. The airline situation, too, is not something to

cheer about. Iberia has a virtual monopoly of air transport, and its resources are heavily overtaxed — on the flights the tourist is most likely to be using, reservations should be made well in advance.

The best way to see Spain is, of course, by car. So long as you never venture off the main highways, road conditions are good and there is little traffic. Self-drive cars can be rented in Spain, but the rates are somewhat higher than those prevailing elsewhere on the continent. Those who are careless should certainly investigate the numerous motor coach tours offered by A.T.E.S.A. (and other companies). These range from one-day sightseeing excursions to all-inclusive tours, the longest of which — a sixteen-day affair — starts out in San Sebastian and runs southward through Madrid down to Cadiz, then swings along the southern and eastern coastline all the way back to Barcelona. Cost: \$290, with rooms and meals in de luxe hotels.

When planning a Spanish holiday, it is a help to think of the country in terms of four sectors in which most of the places of interest to the tourist are situated — the Center (Madrid and surroundings); the South (Andalusia and the “Coast of the Sun”); the Northwest (San Sebastian and the “art towns” between it and Madrid); the Northeast (Barcelona, the Costa Brava, and, 55 minutes by air from Barcelona, the island of Mallorca). Spain is a large and mountainous country — the third largest in Europe; and local communications, as I have noted, are on the inadequate side. The visitor with a week to fifteen days at his disposal should probably settle for the Madrid area and one other — my personal recommendation would be the South. Spring and fall are the most attractive times to visit the capital, and in the South the winter months, too, are agreeable. Summer is the high season for San Sebastian, the Costa Brava, and Mallorca.

Sights and spectacles

Madrid is a city in which to linger a while, visiting and revisiting the Prado, especially its incomparable collection of the Spanish masters; making excursions to Toledo, to the gloomy but imposing Escorial, to Segovia and nearby La Granja, the “Versailles” of Philip V, and to the medieval walled town of Avila; sampling the diversity of restaurants —

the best in Spain — and looking through the shops where, whether you make a purchase or not, you will usually be treated with an affecting courtesy. The oldest part of Madrid, which you enter from the exquisite Plaza de la Villa, one of the loveliest small squares in Spain, should be explored by night when the lamplight gives the narrow alleys an unforgettable enchantment.

Until a few years ago, the tourist's search for flamenco dancing in Madrid was apt to land him in clip joints where he would be grossly overcharged and see only third-rate performers. This frustrating situation has been remedied by the opening of La Zambra, where the finest singers and dancers from Andalusia put on a nonstop performance from 11 P.M. to 3 A.M. The price of drinks is steep, but La Zambra is good value at that: its show cannot be matched anywhere else in the world. In Granada, in the music hall of the Alhambra Palace Hotel, one can sometimes see good flamenco. The performances in the famous gypsy caves, in Granada's Albaicin quarter, are pathetically amateurish; but the caves, equipped with electric light and sometimes telephone, and the gypsies themselves, are probably worth the visit.

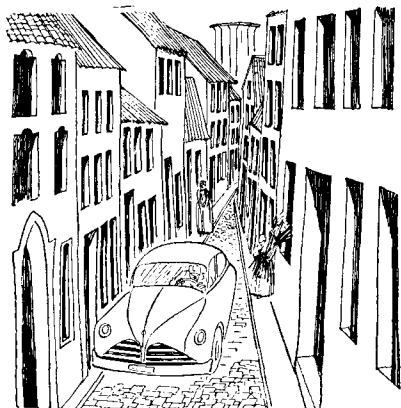
In Granada, the Alhambra and the gardens of the Generalife, whose wonders have been so abundantly celebrated, fully matched my expectations. And the same, by and large, was true of other great cultural landmarks of southern Spain — the Alcazar and the Cathedral at Seville, the



largest Gothic church in existence, and the Mosque at Cordoba.

Seville — of which a proverb says: “God gives a house in Seville to those he loves” — is a town of spacious gardens; of squares perfumed by orange trees and of balconies bright with flowers and ferns; of open doorways that lead your eye into inviting

patios, massed with greenery and framed by walls colorfully adorned with the ceramic plates which the



Spanish use so tastefully in decorating their houses. These enchantments are best seen in the ancient Santa Cruz quarter. One encounters them again, though not so richly, in the old sections of Cordoba. In Cordoba, the Moorish imprint is everywhere — one really feels oneself on the threshold of Africa.

A tour of southern Spain should not fail to include Jerez de la Frontera, 65 miles south of Seville and capital of the sherry district, where the *bodegas* of Pedro Domecq, Gonzalez Byass, and other producers are open to visitors between 11 A.M. and 2 P.M. As you are conducted through the churchlike sanctuaries where the barrels are stored, your escort explains the fascinating process by which sherry is produced and invites you to taste a dizzying variety of the three main types — Fino, Amontillado, and Oloroso.

One more of the South's major attractions should be mentioned — the Costa del Sol between Algeciras and Malaga, which in spring becomes a coast of flowers. Torremolinos and Marbella are the leading resorts, but there are fine beaches all along this stretch of coast.

Most tourists who go to Spain are bent on seeing a bullfight (which nowadays is not, from the statistician's standpoint, Spain's most popular fiesta: soccer, known as *fútbol*, draws more spectators). During the bullfight season, March to mid-October, there are *corridos* on Sundays and holidays all over the country — but a word of warning is in order. As there are only a few great matadors, the odds are that if you take whatever the local *plaza de toros* has to offer, you will witness a routine performance — and that can be a miserable spectacle. One way of seeing, for sure, several

corridos featuring the greatest matadors is to go to San Sebastian, a summer resort near the French frontier, for the *Semana Grande* in mid-August.

Between San Sebastian and Madrid lie several of the "art towns" of northern and central Spain — the A.T.E.S.A. tours are a convenient way of visiting them. Leon, capital of the kingdom joined to Castile in the early Middle Ages, is noted for its thirteenth-century Gothic cathedral, so suffused with colored lights from the magnificent stained glass windows that the inhabitants call it "The Lantern." The Gothic cathedral at Burgos is also among the masterpieces of religious architecture in Spain. Valladolid's Museum of Religious Sculpture has an unequalled collection of the works of Berruguete, the greatest Spanish sculptor of the Renaissance, and of the later Spanish masters. Salamanca, seat of Spain's oldest university, is an architectural treasure house, with its sumptuous plateresque buildings, its startling twin cathedrals — the old, Romanesque; the "new," Gothic — and its vast Baroque main square.

Barcelona, the metropolis of Cata-

lonia, is to Spain what Milan — hardheaded, commercial, pushing — is to Italy; I have heard its businessmen described as "the Americans of Spain." A day or two in Barcelona, preparatory to taking off for Mallorca or the Costa Brava, is all that is justified on a two-week timetable. The "Rugged Coast," which begins northeast of Barcelona and runs 110 miles by road to the French frontier, is a riviera which remains relatively uncommercialized. With its fjordlike inlets and its forests of cork trees and umbrella pine, its sandy bays and its small, dazzlingly white fishing villages, flanked by the rust of the headlands and the blue of the sea, the Costa Brava has few rivals among Europe's coastlines for sheer beauty.

Hotels

The Spanish price scale permits most travelers to do well by themselves without ruinous results; and it is unwise to attempt any economies that are not absolutely necessary.

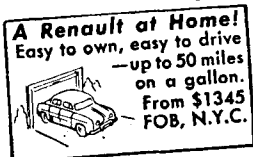
In Madrid, top honors go to the Ritz: it is one of the world's great hotels, with a distinctive aura of old-fashioned grandeur. Both the Ritz and the Palace are ideal as to lo-

Going to Europe?

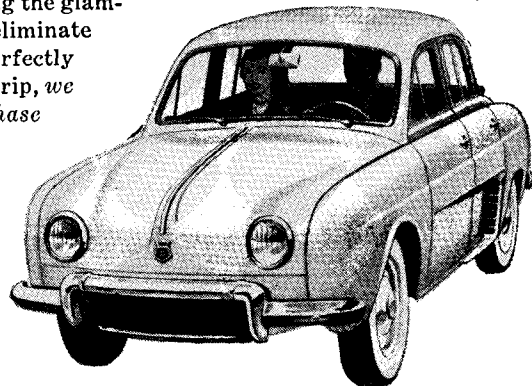
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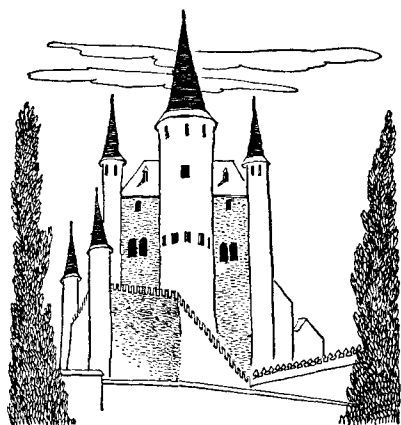


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cation — right beside the Prado Museum and a few minutes' walk from the heart of the city. Two good hotels in a slightly lower price bracket are the Velazquez and the Menfis.

In Seville, the Alfonso XIII, with its elaborate Moorish décor, is a picturesque curiosity — Victorian but comfortable and well-run. Granada offers the choice of two showplaces — the Parador de San Francisco and the Alhambra Palace. The latter is situated halfway up the hill leading to the Alhambra; and its bar-terrace, from which stretches a magnificent panorama, is as fine a place as any in Spain in which to linger at dusk over a couple of glasses of sherry. The Parador de San Francisco — a remodeled monastery in the gardens of the Alhambra — is the most seductive of the state-run luxury inns of which the Spanish Tourist Department is justly so proud. To get one of its

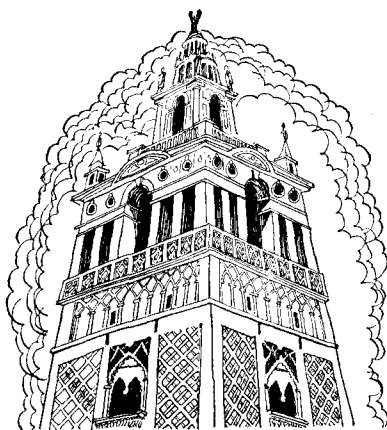


sixteen rooms you have to make reservations well in advance.

Other outstanding hotels in the South are the festive Reina Cristina at Algeciras, from which you have a fine view of Gibraltar across the bay; the Miramar, on the ocean's edge at Malaga; and the new air-conditioned Cordoba Palace in Cordoba. In Barcelona, the Ritz is superlative all round, the Avenida Palace is up-to-date and less expensive. There is one top-drawer establishment on the Costa Brava: the Hostal de la Gavina at S'Agaró.

Gastronomic notebook

Opinions about Spanish cuisine differ sharply. By and large, it is a cuisine most likely to appeal to the adventurous, and to those who are unconcerned about their liver or their figure. One can, however, protect oneself against the customary practice of frying most foods in pools of olive oil simply by impressing upon



the waiter the magic words: *preparado en mantequilla* — cooked in butter.

The specialties of the various regions include the famous *paella* (a mixture of saffron rice, shellfish, peppers, and chicken or meat), *calamares en su tinta* (squids in their ink), *bacalao* (codfish), *gazpacho* (a cold soup of raw cucumbers and tomatoes, flavored with oil, vinegar, and garlic), and all manner of shellfish. The beef is usually disappointing, the chicken too. The best meats are roast lamb, suckling pig, and smoked ham. While Spanish wines are rarely great, there are a number which are pleasant and they are rather cheap: in most restaurants, the superior bottles range from 75 cents to \$1.75. Among the reds, I recommend Marqués del Riscal and (in the top bracket) Gran Reserva. The driest white wines are Cepa Rhin, Cepa Chablis, Viña Solé, and (best of all) Monopole.

There are three restaurants in Madrid which deserve to be called great — Jockey, Horcher's (German), and the Commodore. Here are six others, much less expensive and more Spanish in character, which I also found attractive: Valentin's (a favorite of bullfighters, visiting celebrities, and knowledgeable Madrileños); Chipen's (good cooking, smart and quiet); Corral de la Morería (flamenco show, outstanding *paella*); El Pulpito and Casa Botín (modest surroundings and prices, above average food); Mesón de San Javier (in the old quarter, lashings of authentic local color). Barcelona, too, offers plenty of choice — Finisterre and Parellada (expensive); Amaya (Basque cuisine, moderate); Los Caracoles (local color).

In Andalusia, the gastronomic situation declines precipitously. The only places where I fared at all well were the Hostería de Gibralfaro, where you dine on a hilltop terrace with a stunning vista of the twinkling lights of

Malaga; the grill room of the Alhambra Palace in Granada; the Cordoba Palace; the Hostería del Prado in Seville; and Los Cisnes at Jerez.

Spanish mealtimes demand a considerable readjustment on the part of foreigners. Lunch is between two and four o'clock. Dinner begins at ten, but if you are eating with Spaniards, you're not likely to get to table before eleven.

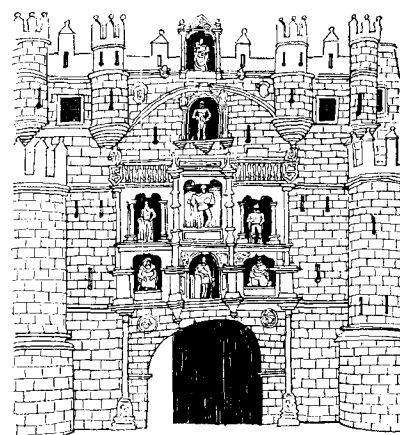
Shopping

The legend that in Madrid a man can have a well-cut suit made in no time for \$40 is not entirely to be trusted. These three-day, \$40 jobs are often a mess, and the best tailors insist on at least three weeks. On the other hand, a woman who is staying a week in Madrid can indulge in *haute couture* at bargain prices. My expert and indefatigable researcher in this province recommends two houses in particular: Marbel and Caruncho (which copies Paris models and also has exciting creations of its own).

Loewe's in Madrid and Barcelona has the handsomest leather goods I have seen anywhere in the world, but its prices are fierce. The best values in Spain are gloves; mantillas; ceramics — especially the fine old plates from Talavera and Manises; wrought-iron work of all kinds; and antiques. For the last, investigate Linares (Madrid, Seville, Granada) and the Madrid Rastro or flea market, where there are many attractive pieces along with the junk. Maresas, not far from the Palace Hotel, is an honest and conscientious shipper.

Envoi

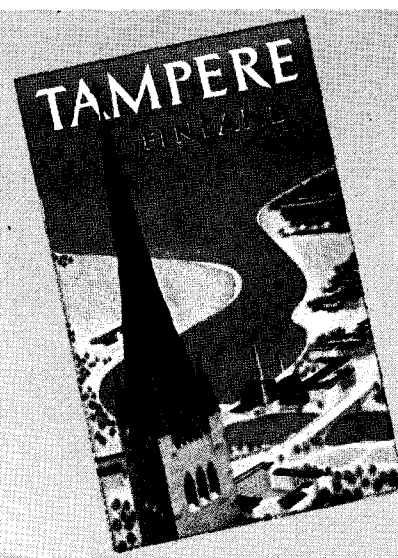
For information about Spanish fiestas and other matters not covered



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